



U.S. Department of Justice
Community Relations Service (CRS)

Annual Report 2018

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the
United States of America in Congress Assembled:

With this statement, I hereby transmit a report on the activities of the Community Relations Service of the United States Department of Justice for Fiscal Year 2018. This report is required by Section 1004 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) and by Reorganization Plan No. 1 of 1966, as revised by 28 C.F.R. 0.30(b).

This report describes the Community Relations Service's conflict resolution activities so that Members of Congress may assess its performance in executing its statutory mandate.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerri Ratliff". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gerri Ratliff

Deputy Director



U.S. Department of Justice

Community Relations Service (CRS)

Annual Report 2018

6	Message from the Deputy Director		
10	Congressional Mandate		
12	About CRS		
12	Mission Statement		
13	Who We Are		
14	About CRS		
14	What We Do		
16	CRS Programs		
19	CRS Map		
20	Fiscal Year 2018 Accomplishments		
21	Administration of Justice Cases		
22	Education Cases		
23	General Community Relations		
24	CRS FY 2018 Highlights		
24	Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Death		
28	Helping to De-Escalate Tension and Foster Dialogue in Sacramento		
32	Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships		
36	Collaborations with Other Department of Justice Components and Federal Agencies		
39	Engaging with Stakeholders through Community Outreach		
42	Employee Spotlight: Thomas Battles, Recipient of the Roger W. Wilkins Peacemaker Award		
45	Regional Case Highlights		
45	New England Region	62	Southwestern Region
50	Northeastern Region	66	Central Region
53	Mid-Atlantic Region	69	Rocky Mountain Region
55	Southeastern Region	71	Western Region
57	Midwestern Region	73	Northwestern Region
78	Frequently Asked Questions		
80	CRS Contact Information		

Message from the Deputy Director ►



▲ Gerri Ratliff, Deputy Director,
Community Relations Service
(U.S. Department of Justice)

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, communities across the country continued to experience conflict and tension stemming from differences of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and disability. Left unaddressed, conflicts can erode public trust and threaten the peace and safety of America's diverse cities and towns. The work of the Community Relations Service (CRS), which helps communities address these problems peacefully through dialogue, problem solving, and improved local capacities, is as important as ever.

CRS, through a staff of 19 conciliators, provided services to communities in 40 states, as well as in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam. These services ranged from conducting six formal mediations between disputing parties and 27 trainings, mostly to law enforcement audiences; to facilitating

25 Hate Crime and Protecting Places of Worship forums, usually after a bias incident or hate crime had been committed in the community; and to conducting more than 300 facilitated dialogues, including 13 Community Dialogues on Race. We also provided more than 300 consultations with community groups, local law enforcement, and local officials to share best practices and offer technical assistance to support their work to reduce tensions and prevent or respond to hate crimes.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Hate Crime Statistics report, released on November 13, 2018, showed a 17 percent increase in reported hate crimes from 2016 to 2017, including:

An 18 percent increase (from 3,489 to 4,131) in hate crimes related to race, ethnicity, and ancestry;

A 23 percent increase (from 1,273 to 1,564) in hate crimes related to religion;

A 66 percent increase (from 70 to 116) in hate crimes related to disability;

A 48 percent increase (from 31 to 46) in hate crimes related to gender;

A five percent increase (from 1,076 to 1,130) in hate crimes related to sexual orientation; and

A four percent decrease (from 124 to 119) in hate crimes related to gender identity.⁴

These statistics underscore the need for communities to be prepared to prevent and respond to hate crimes, as such incidents tear at the fabric of communities, creating fear, mistrust, and tension among community members and contributing to longstanding conflict. The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009, approaching its 10-year anniversary, is needed now, more than ever.

In FY 2018, CRS took a number of steps to enhance its services to help communities respond to hate crimes and bias incidents and support law enforcement working to strengthen relations with communities. CRS piloted the Protecting Places of Worship forum, which brings together law enforcement, security officials, interfaith leaders, civil rights groups, and community members to educate faith communities on religion-based hate crimes, ways to increase the physical security of religious buildings, and how to respond to active shooter situations. In light of recent attacks on houses of worship across the faith spectrum, this forum provides educational resources for congregations concerned about the safety and well-being of their members.

⁴ "Federal Bureau of Investigation 2017 Hate Crimes Statistics: Incidents, Offenses, Victims, and Known Offenders by Bias Motivation, 2017," <https://ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/2017/topic-pages/tables/table-1.xls>

"Federal Bureau of Investigation 2016 Hate Crimes Statistics: Incidents, Offenses, Victims, and Known Offenders by Bias Motivation, 2016," <https://ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/2016/tables/table-1>

To support local efforts to build robust police-community relations, CRS piloted the Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships (SPCP) program in Erie, Pennsylvania, and Topeka, Kansas. These two cities requested the program to address tensions following officer-involved shootings, along with historical tensions between local law enforcement and residents. Through the SPCP program, CRS works with city and police officials, community leaders, and residents as they address local problems through dialogue and problem solving. The program facilitates the development of local solutions and is focused on

and Engaging and Building Partnerships with Sikh Americans, were introduced at a CRS stakeholder engagement event in Washington, D.C., in March 2018. CRS piloted the updated programs at the request of city and law enforcement officials from the Kansas City metropolitan area, following the 2017 murder of an Indian man in Olathe, Kansas. The shooter pled guilty to federal hate crime charges after being convicted of first-degree murder. The programs allow city and law enforcement personnel to learn from subject matter experts about specific Muslim and Sikh religious practices and develop strategies to

The positive impact that CRS continues to have on communities across the country is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our staff.

achieving results through the development of concrete action plans that help to build trust and improve collaboration between law enforcement agencies and the diverse communities they serve.

This year, CRS also updated two training programs to help law enforcement gain a better understanding of and strengthen relationships with the Muslim American and Sikh American communities. The two programs, Engaging and Building Partnerships with Muslim Americans

improve interactions and delivery of services to these communities.

In addition to our individual programs and services to communities, CRS is proud of its collaborative efforts with other Department of Justice (DOJ) components to provide coordinated services and resources to stakeholders. In FY 2018, CRS supported the development of the DOJ Hate Crimes website, www.justice.gov/hatecrimes, which officially launched in October 2018. CRS worked closely

with the DOJ Civil Rights Division, Executive Office for United States Attorneys, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, and Office of Justice Programs to create a single portal for visitors to access all of DOJ's resources for hate crimes education, prevention, and response. The website had almost 5,000 visitors in its first month and received very positive focus group feedback from law enforcement representatives for its comprehensiveness and utility.

The positive impact that CRS continues to have on communities across the country is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our staff. In FY 2018, we recognized the contributions of one CRS staff member in particular, Thomas Battles, Regional Director (RD) for the Southeastern and New England Regions, who exemplifies the excellence and commitment to which we all aspire. RD Battles is the first recipient of the Roger W. Wilkins Peacemaker Award, created to honor the late civil rights pioneer and former CRS director. The award recognizes a CRS employee whose extraordinary contributions reflect Director Wilkins' lifelong commitment to public service and demonstrate vision, innovation, resilience, and leadership. Over the span of 34 years with CRS, RD Battles has dedicated his life to civil rights and helping communities find peace through turbulent times. Presenting the first Roger W. Wilkins Peacemaker Award to RD Battles was truly an honor.

Finally, FY 2018 was a year of solemn remembrance, as well as hope, as we commemorated the 50th anniversary of the assassination of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., whose tireless efforts helped lead to passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which established CRS. Dr. King's legacy of promoting peace, racial equality, and civil rights through greater understanding, dialogue, and nonviolent action, lives on today, and CRS is proud to be a part of such a hallowed legacy. In that spirit, I would like to thank each CRS employee, from the Conciliation Specialists and Regional Directors in the field, to the operations and mission support staff at headquarters, as well as the numerous organizations and individuals with whom CRS works, for their support in helping us achieve our mission as "America's Peacemaker" in keeping with Dr. King's vision.

Sincerely,



Gerri Ratliff
CRS Deputy Director



▲ President Lyndon Baines Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964, surrounded by civil rights and congressional leaders.
(Getty Images/Photo 12/UIG)

Excerpt from the Civil Rights Act of 1964:

“It shall be the function of the Service to provide assistance to communities and persons therein resolving disputes, disagreements, or difficulties relating to the discriminatory practices based on race, color, or national origin which impair the rights of persons in such communities under the Constitution or laws of the United States or which affect or may affect interstate commerce.

The Service may offer its services in cases of such disputes, disagreements, or difficulties whenever, in its judgment, peaceful relations among the citizens of the community involved are threatened thereby, and it may offer its services either upon its own motion or upon the request of an appropriate State or local official or other interested person.”

—42 U.S.C. 2000g-1



▲ President Barack Obama stands on-stage with Dennis and Judy Shepard, parents of Matthew Shepard, and Louvon Harris and Betty Byrd Boatner, sisters of James Byrd, Jr., during his remarks marking the enactment of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act, in the East Room of the White House, October 28, 2009. (Getty Images/Chip Somodevilla)

Excerpt from the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act:

“There are authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Justice, including the Community Relations Service, for fiscal years 2010, 2011, and 2012, such sums as are necessary to increase the number of personnel to prevent and respond to alleged violations of section 249 of title 18, United States Code ... Whoever, whether or not acting under color of law, willfully causes bodily injury to any person or, through the use of fire, a firearm, a dangerous weapon, or an explosive or incendiary device, attempts to cause bodily injury to any person, because of the actual or perceived race, color, religion, or national origin of any person— ... Whoever, whether or not acting under color of law, in any circumstance described in subparagraph (B) or paragraph (3), willfully causes bodily injury to any person or, through the use of a fire, a firearm, a dangerous weapon or an explosive or incendiary device, attempts to cause bodily injury to any person, because of the actual or perceived religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability of any person—(i) shall be imprisoned not more than 10 years, fined in accordance with this title, or both; and (ii) shall be imprisoned for any term of years or for life, fined in accordance with this title, or both, if—(I) death results from the offense; or (II) the offense includes kidnapping or an attempt to kidnap, aggravated sexual abuse or an attempt to commit aggravated abuse or an attempt to kill.” —P.L. 111-84, §§4706-4707

Mission Statement

The United States Department of Justice (DOJ) Community Relations Service (CRS) serves as “America’s Peacemaker” for communities in conflict by mediating disputes and enhancing community capacity to independently prevent and resolve future conflicts.

Pursuant to Title X of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009, CRS works with community groups to resolve community conflicts and prevent and respond to alleged violent hate crimes arising from differences of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

With its unique mission, CRS is the only federal agency dedicated to assisting state and local units of government, private and public organizations, law enforcement, and community groups to resolve conflicts based on these aspects of identity, whether related to an individual’s race, religion, gender, or other statutory category. CRS helps facilitate the development of viable, mutual understandings and agreements, as alternatives to coercion, violence, or litigation. Additionally, CRS conducts trainings and helps develop locally-based, long-term mechanisms that communities may use to prevent tension and violent hate crimes. CRS Conciliation Specialists are impartial and do not take sides among disputing parties. Rather, CRS aids parties in developing their own mutually agreeable solutions.



Who We Are

CRS's alternative dispute resolution services are facilitated by highly-skilled Conciliation Specialists who provide mediation, facilitated dialogue, training, and consultation services to communities experiencing conflict across the United States and in its territories.

Conciliation Specialists bring together community leaders; education representatives; members of private and public organizations; representatives of civil rights groups; law enforcement officers; and federal, state, and local officials to facilitate open discussions that lead to collaborative solutions to conflicts arising from the identity-based disputes enumerated in CRS's authorizing legislation.

CRS staff travel to local cities and towns to work directly with all community conflict stakeholders and assist them in developing strategies to respond to conflicts and reduce tensions. CRS Conciliation Specialists are trained professional mediators, facilitators, trainers, and consultants, who are experienced in bringing community members together to help them enhance their ability to prevent and resolve existing and future conflicts.

“We have no hope of solving our problems

without harnessing the diversity, the energy,

and the creativity of *all our people.*”

ROGER WILKINS, FORMER CRS DIRECTOR AND CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER



▲ CRS staff members gather with participants at a stakeholder engagement event on March 23, 2018 (U.S. Department of Justice)

What We Do

To accomplish its mission, CRS provides four services: facilitated dialogues, mediation, training, and consultation. These services help communities enhance their ability to alleviate tension, resolve disputes, and prevent future conflicts more effectively.

Facilitated Dialogues

Conciliation Specialists provide facilitated dialogue services to help communities open lines of communication by listening to the issues of each stakeholder group and learning from each party about the problem and underlying issues of the conflict. These dialogues often include various local and federal agencies, faith-based organizations, educational institutions, civil rights organizations, and community residents. Topics of discussion frequently include race, police-community relations, perceived hate crimes and bias incidents, tribal conflicts, and protests and demonstrations. The dialogues help communities develop action plans for building trust and strengthening relationships between groups, as well as resolving conflicts in neighborhoods and schools.

Mediation

Conciliation Specialists serve as mediators to help diverse stakeholders resolve community-level disputes. As mediators, Conciliation Specialists assume the role of neutral third parties, who facilitate problem-solving discussions with parties in conflict. These mediation sessions are confidential, allowing for candid discussion of issues, interests, values, and, ultimately, sustainable solutions. Mediation provides a framework that helps communities resolve misunderstandings, establish mutual trust, and independently prevent and resolve

future conflicts. The intent of mediation is not to determine fault. Frequently, the results of a community's mediation will be memorialized in a document, such as a Memorandum of Understanding, Mediation Agreement, Resolution, Proclamation, Collaborative Agreement, Community Pact, or Ordinance.

Training

Conciliation Specialists provide an array of training programs to law enforcement groups and communities as a tool for cultivating understanding, building relationships, and conducting safe public events. Several of these trainings provide a structure for law enforcement to develop plans to strengthen engagement with various community groups. Other trainings provide templates for groups planning marches and other high-profile events to develop procedures to ensure safety.

Consultation

Conciliation Specialists offer consultation services to help educate and empower communities, as well as to refine conflict resolution strategies and improve their ability to address underlying sources of tension. Through consultation, CRS provides technical assistance, as well as information on best practices. This service also includes giving advice, sharing insight, and referring communities to available resources.

CRS Programs

CRS programmatic services assist communities in solving conflicts and building the skills and capacity necessary to prevent and respond to future issues and tension.

These services bring together representatives from local government agencies, community and faith-based organizations, law enforcement agencies, civil rights groups, and businesses to develop collaborative approaches for reducing tensions and addressing the factors that have contributed to the conflict.

Training Programs

Law Enforcement and the Transgender Community: This program provides law enforcement and government officials with information on the transgender community, including definitions and recommended language, outreach strategies, and the impact of hate crimes on transgender individuals.

Engaging and Building Partnerships with Muslim Americans /Engaging and Building Partnerships with Sikh Americans: The goals of these two programs are to increase public awareness of civil rights-related issues that impact Muslim and Sikh Americans, enhance understanding of beliefs and religious practices of Muslim and Sikh Americans to improve communication and public safety for all community members, and provide best practices for collaboration with the Muslim and Sikh American communities and a template for related action planning.

Contingency Planning: Reducing Risk During Public Events: This program increases participants' knowledge of how to plan for safe public events, such as demonstrations or rallies, in order to decrease the potential for violence. It also includes time for participants to begin developing an appropriate plan to prepare for and hold an event and assess and address



(Shutterstock/Steve Quinlan)

potential issues for maintaining public safety during the event.

Event Marshals: Supporting Safety During Public Events: Event Marshals support a safe and successful public event by being the primary point of contact with event participants. The goal of this program is to explain the expectations for the Event Marshal position, as well as the importance of the Event Marshal's role in maintaining public safety during an event.

Facilitated Dialogue Programs

Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships (SPCP): SPCP convenes law enforcement and diverse community leaders in problem-solving discussions focused on overcoming historic barriers, improving trust, and developing partnerships. The program is designed to increase local community capacity and implement solutions to address police-community relations issues.



(Shutterstock/lev radin)



(Shutterstock/Suzanne Tucker)

Dialogue on Race: The Dialogue on Race program brings together diverse community members to exchange information, share personal stories and experiences, express perspectives, clarify viewpoints, and develop understanding on race-related issues. Through the dialogue process, parties are able to identify commonalities and ways to work together to improve community relations.

School-Student Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together

(School-SPIRIT): The School-SPIRIT program engages diverse student leaders in identifying issues impacting their school and developing and implementing solutions to resolve those issues. A similar program is available for college or university settings, called Campus-Site Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (Campus-SPIRIT).



(Shutterstock/Rawpixel.com)

City-Site Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (City-SPIRIT):

The City-SPIRIT program brings together public officials, law enforcement, faith-based and civil rights leaders, and other community groups to identify issues impacting their neighborhoods and implement solutions that reduce conflict, improve communication, and minimize the potential for future conflict.



(Shutterstock/Stefano Ember)

Community Forums Focused on Responding to Hate Crimes

Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes Forum:

CRS facilitates forums that convene local and federal law enforcement and community-based organizations in educational discussions to share information about hate crime laws and reporting, as well as approaches to combat and respond to bias incidents and hate crimes. These forums also provide the opportunity for law enforcement and community members to network and strengthen relationships.



(Shutterstock/a katz)

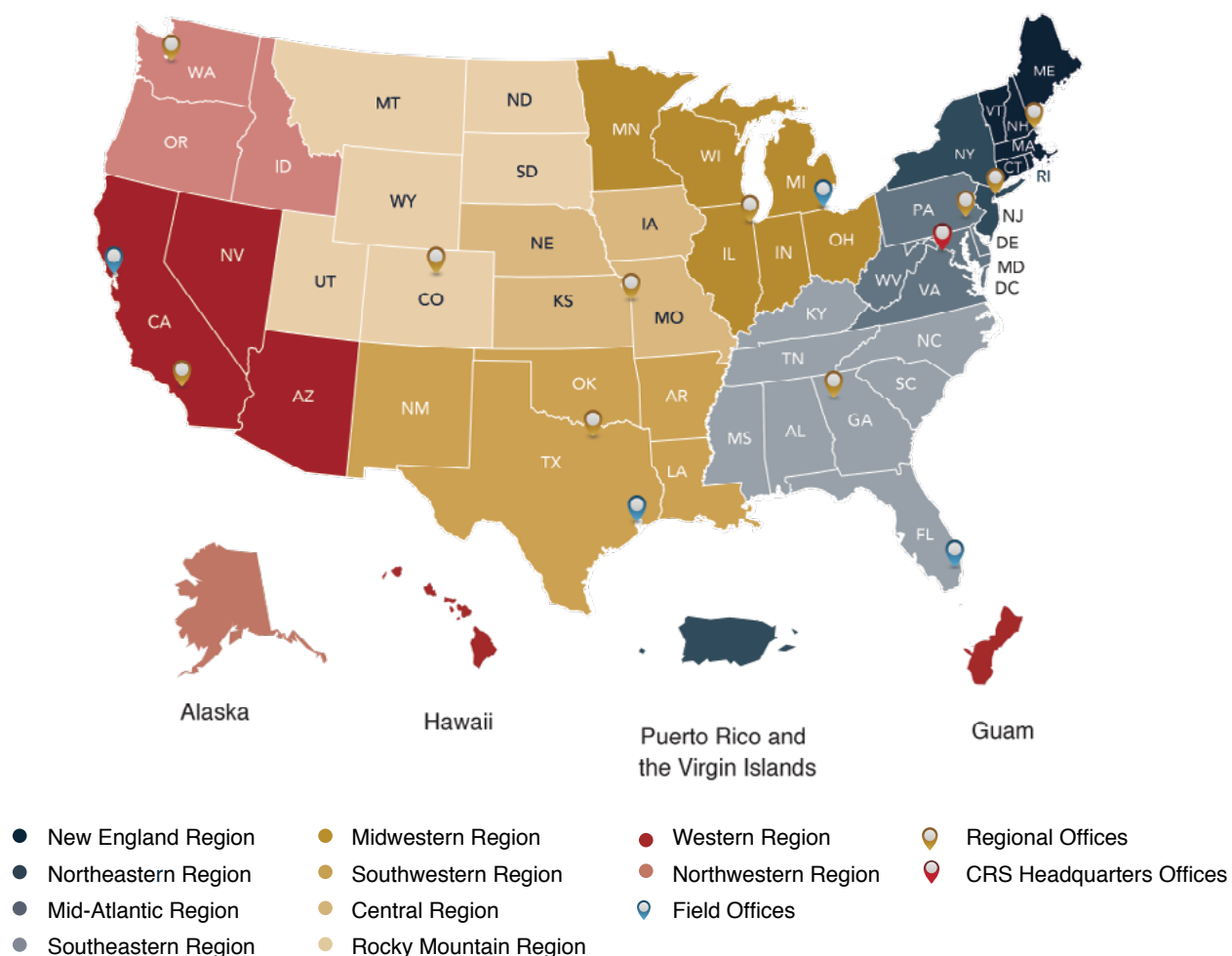
Protecting Places of Worship: These forums offer best practices to help communities protect places of worship against potential threats. The forums convene local, state, and federal law enforcement officials and faith-based organizations in a dialogue to provide information and resources related to hate crime laws, active shooter situations, and physical security at religious buildings.

CRS Map

CRS has ten Regional Offices and four Field Offices across the country.

The Regional Offices are in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Kansas City, Denver, Los Angeles, and Seattle. Additionally, CRS has four Field Offices, which support the Regional Offices' activities. The Field Offices are in Miami, Detroit, Houston, and San Francisco.

All CRS offices are strategically located to increase the availability of CRS services to the communities they serve and to allow for rapid deployment to communities in crisis. Contact information for the Regional and Field Offices can be found on page 80 of this report, as well as on the CRS website.

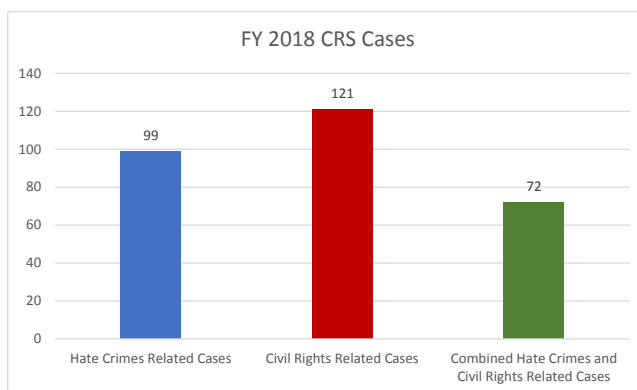
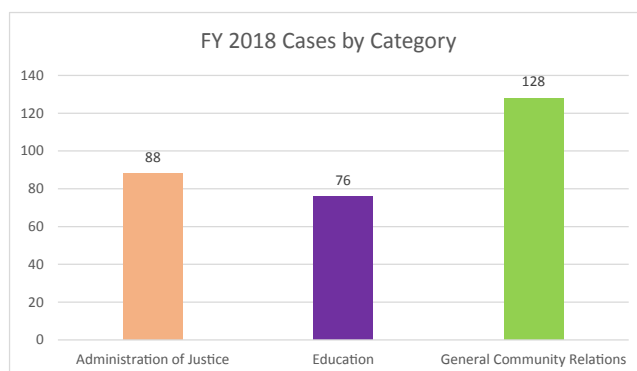


In FY 2018, a myriad of federal, state, and local government officials, law enforcement agencies, school administrators, community leaders, and civil rights organizations called upon CRS to address conflicts and support their efforts to prevent and respond to alleged hate crimes based on actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

These conflicts ranged from allegations of disparate treatment in schools and alleged hate crimes against various diverse communities to concerns of civil unrest during public demonstrations.

During FY 2018, CRS completed a total of 292 cases throughout the United States and its territories.⁴ Of these cases, 99 were related to alleged hate crimes, 121 were related to alleged civil rights issues, and 72 were related to both alleged civil rights issues and hate crimes.

CRS's services are classified into three primary categories: Administration of Justice, Education, and General Community Relations. Cases included CRS-facilitated dialogues between aggrieved parties, mediations, training, and consultations with law enforcement personnel, U.S. and district attorneys, school administrators, civil rights leaders, and other community leaders across the country.

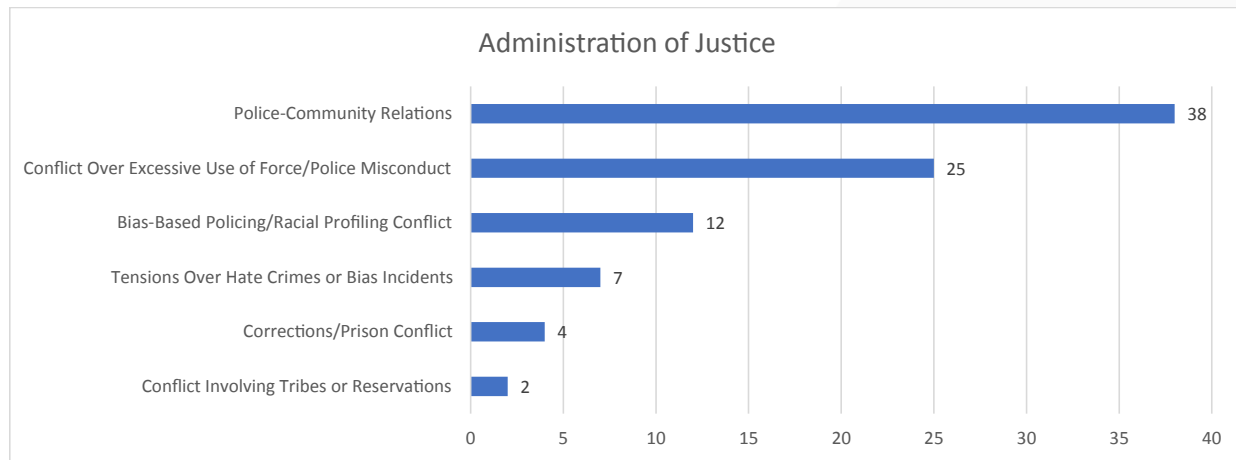


² In FY 2017, CRS completed 449 total cases. In FY 2018, CRS updated its criteria for determining what is considered a case. In prior fiscal years, when more than two CRS services were provided for a particular event, a new case was opened. This policy meant that, at times, CRS's case management system included multiple cases related to the same event. In FY 2018, CRS consolidated all services related to a particular event into one case, which streamlined reporting and reduced the total number of cases.

Administration of Justice Cases

Administration of Justice (AOJ) cases are defined as those where tension exists between law enforcement and the community.

In FY 2018, CRS completed 88 AOJ cases. The largest number of these cases was related to general police-community relations. The remaining AOJ cases were largely in the areas of conflict over allegations of excessive use of force by law enforcement, tension related to allegations of bias-based policing and racial profiling by law enforcement, and tensions over hate crimes or bias incidents.

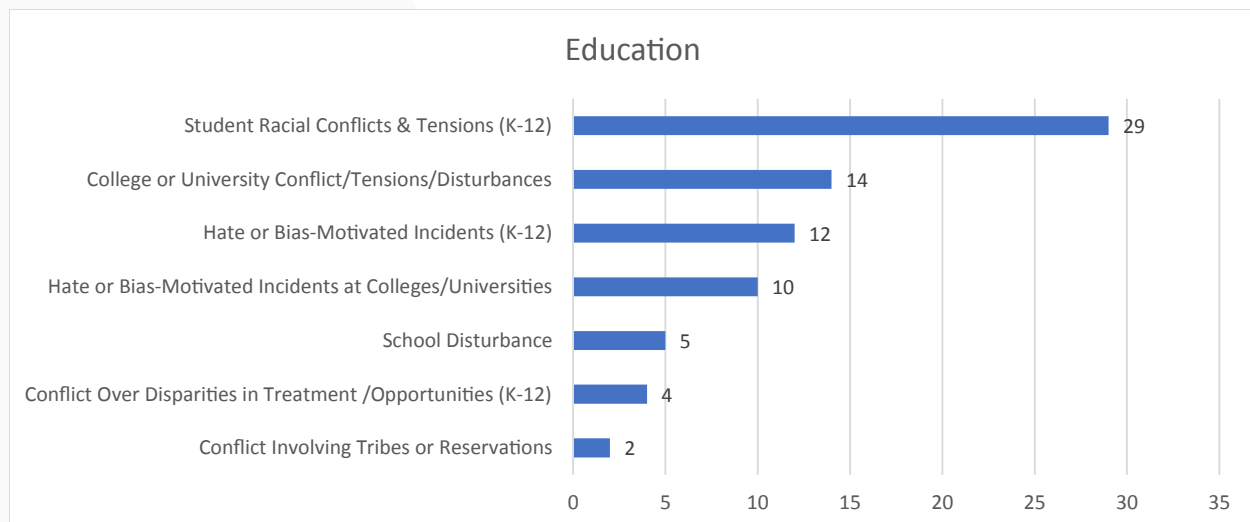


In many cases, local government officials and law enforcement asked CRS to provide conflict resolution or mediation services, to conduct cultural awareness training, or to provide technical assistance in resolving conflicts. In other instances, community and civil rights organizations asked CRS to facilitate community dialogues with law enforcement, local government agencies, and other entities within their communities.

Education Cases

Education cases are those that derive from school-related actions or incidents and increase community tension.

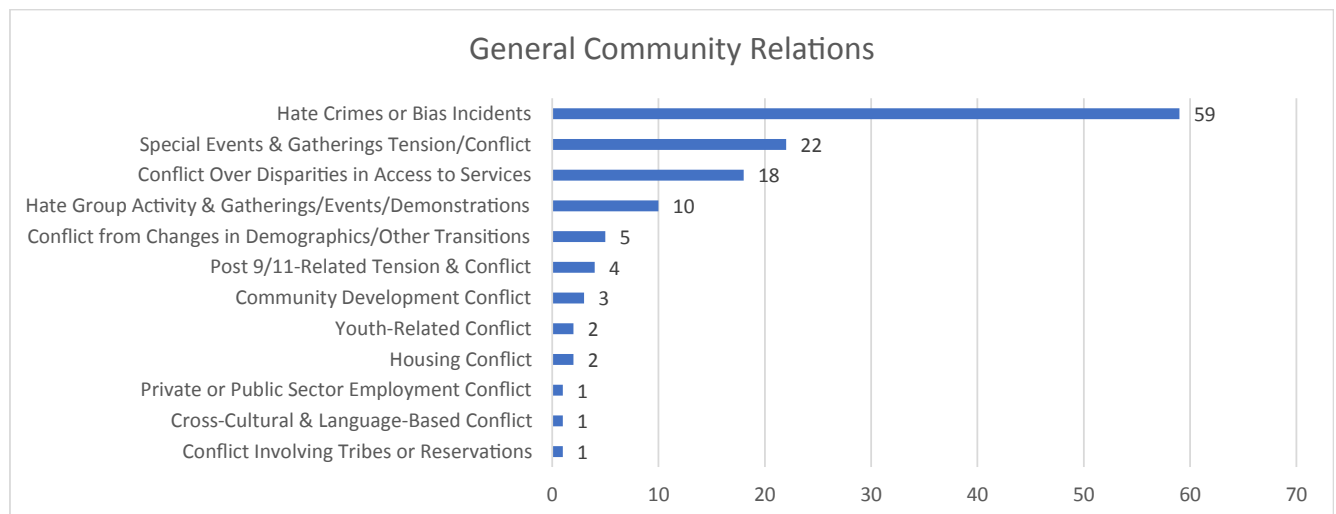
In FY 2018, CRS completed a total of 76 education cases. The largest portion of education cases stemmed from racial conflict and tension in middle and high schools. CRS also worked on a number of cases involving conflict, tensions, and alleged hate crimes at colleges and universities. Some of these incidents received media attention and raised community-wide tension, but in many instances, these cases caused conflicts that were known only to local communities or the school's direct stakeholders.



General Community Relations

General Community Relations cases derive from incidents not related to educational institutions or law enforcement action that raise tension in the community.

In FY 2018, CRS completed a total of 128 General Community Relations cases. The largest number of these cases were related to alleged hate crimes and bias incidents. CRS also completed a large number of cases related to jurisdictional conflict and tension at special events and gatherings, such as public demonstrations and marches.





▲ Coretta Scott King and civil rights leader, Reverend Ralph Abernathy, lead a march in Memphis, TN, on April 8, 1968 four days after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Getty Images/Robert Abbott Sengstacke)

COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Death

On April 3, 1968, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his final public speech in Memphis, Tennessee, inspiring his listeners to continue striving for unity and racial equality. He spoke of his bright vision for the future — that he had been to the “mountaintop” — and exclaimed, “I may not get there with you, but I want you to know tonight that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land.”⁴

Dr. King was killed less than 24 hours later.

FY 2018 marked the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination. The history and work of CRS are deeply intertwined with Dr. King's life and legacy. His fight to end injustice and secure racial equality and equal rights for all Americans led to the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which established CRS. Since then, CRS has helped ensure the continuation of Dr. King's legacy of addressing community problems through peaceful means.

“I may not get there with you, but I want you to know tonight that
we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land.”

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

⁴ “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop,” Speech by Martin Luther King, Jr., on April 3, 1968 in Memphis, TN

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and CRS: A Civil Rights History

In its early years, CRS was active in helping to reduce and prevent violence and conflict during the turbulent era in which Dr. King sought to advance civil rights through peaceful resistance.

In March 1965, less than a year after its formation, CRS was on the ground in Selma, Alabama. CRS was present to help prevent civil disorder during the latter two of three marches led by Dr. King, as part of the Voting Rights Movement. At the request of President Lyndon Johnson, CRS worked with Dr. King, law enforcement, and city officials to help ensure the marches were peaceful. These marches were catalysts for passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

CRS continued to work with Dr. King and the Southern Christian Leadership Council throughout the mid- to late-1960s to ensure protests remained peaceful as the civil rights movement moved to other areas of the country. In fact, CRS was consulting with Dr. King and Memphis officials to conciliate racial tensions in the city when he was assassinated.

Following Dr. King's tragic death, CRS helped maintain peace in Memphis by facilitating dialogue among community members. In keeping with Dr. King's legacy of peace, CRS's intervention helped the Memphis community avoid much of the violence that inflamed numerous other cities across the country immediately following the assassination.

Pursuing Dr. King's Dream

Dr. King's legacy of striving for racial equality and civil rights through nonviolent means continues today. He inspired a nation of followers to exercise their First Amendment right to peaceful assembly. Over the years, CRS has monitored almost every major civil rights-related public demonstration across the country, helping to ensure organizers are properly trained to maintain peace during these events and providing on-the-ground conciliation support.

The annual day of remembrance on the anniversary of Dr. King's assassination in Memphis is one such event. The event is organized in Memphis by the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees' Union (AFSCME) Local 1733. It was the AFSCME Sanitation Workers' Strike in 1968 that Dr. King was supporting in Memphis the day he was murdered. Since 1968, CRS has historically provided training and on-the-ground support to AFSCME event planners.

In FY 2018, CRS deployed a team of six to Memphis to support AFSCME events commemorating the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's passing, as well as the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Workers' Strike. The team consisted of General Counsel Antoinette Barksdale, Associate Director Theresa Segovia, Regional Director Thomas Battles, Senior Conciliation Specialist Walter Atkinson, Conciliation Specialist Dion Lyons, and Conciliation Specialist Mildred Duprey de Robles.

CRS trained approximately 370 AFSCME volunteers to serve as event marshals during a

planned rally and march, which included civil rights activists, elected officials, clergy, and other leaders. The onsite CRS team monitored the first rally held at the AFSCME Local 1733 Union Office, which also served as the staging site for the march. Approximately 25,000 people marched from the Union Office to the Mason Temple Church of God in Christ, which was the venue for Dr. King's last public speech and the site of the second rally. All activities related to this historic event were peaceful with no civil unrest or disruption.

ending in destruction for all.”⁴

Throughout its 54-year history, CRS has worked with civil rights, community, and faith-based organizations across the country that strive for justice through peaceful means, in keeping with Dr. King's philosophy. Helping jurisdictional organizations hold peaceful demonstrations is one way in which CRS keeps Dr. King's legacy alive. Through training, mediation, and facilitated dialogue, CRS also helps communities prevent and

In March 1965, less than a year after its formation, CRS was on the ground in Selma, Alabama. CRS was present to help prevent civil disorder during the latter two of three marches led by Dr. King, as part of the Voting Rights Movement.



▲ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and wife, Coretta Scott King lead demonstrators on the fourth day of their march from Selma to Montgomery, AL. (Getty Images/Ben Martin)

Striving for Peace and Civil Rights

“Violence as a way of achieving racial justice is both impractical and immoral,” Dr. King said in his lecture upon accepting the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. “I am not unmindful of the fact that violence often brings about momentary results. Nations have frequently won their independence in battle. But in spite of temporary victories, violence never brings permanent peace. It solves no social problem: it merely creates new and more complicated ones. Violence is impractical because it is a descending spiral

respond to the kinds of conflicts and hate crimes that hinder the nation's progress toward civil rights that Dr. King helped to set in motion.

As a civil rights agency and “America's Peacemaker,” CRS supports communities working to overcome conflict and injustice through greater understanding and dialogue, as opposed to violence. This pursuit is in keeping with Dr. King's belief that “We must come to see that the end we seek is a society at peace with itself, a society that can live with its conscience.”

⁴ “The Quest for Peace and Justice,” Nobel Lecture by Martin Luther King, Jr., on December 11, 1964, in Oslo, Norway

⁵ “Address at the Conclusion of the Selma to Montgomery March,” Speech by Martin Luther King, Jr., on March 25, 1965, in Montgomery, AL



▲ Activists march and stage rallies outside of the District Attorney's office in Sacramento, CA, following the death of Stephon Clark. (Getty Images/Justin Sullivan)

Helping to De-Escalate Tension and Foster Dialogue in Sacramento

On March 18, 2018, in Sacramento, California, police officers shot and killed Stephon Clark, an unarmed, 22-year-old African American man. Police pursued Mr. Clark into his grandmother's backyard where the shooting occurred after receiving reports of a man fitting his description breaking car windows in South Sacramento's Meadowview neighborhood.

The shooting sparked outrage among community members who perceived the shooting to be racially-motivated. Protests spontaneously erupted across the city, surrounding City Hall and the District Attorney's office. Protesters blocked access to the Golden 1 Center on multiple nights, leading to the delay of and limiting access to a Sacramento Kings game. In addition, protesters shut down portions of the Interstate-5 freeway and blocked passenger cars on city streets. Sacramento was a city in conflict.

No single entity was behind the protests. Rather, many different groups organized multiple, individual demonstrations, with varying interests and levels of intensity, in neighborhoods throughout Sacramento. Addressing these multiple, uncoordinated, and widespread conflicts created a challenge for city officials.

48 Hour Critical Response

CRS was on the ground in Sacramento less than 24 hours after the shooting to help the city address the protests and de-escalate tensions. The CRS

a long-standing network of contacts in the city. CRS began working with the city to address the community's concerns. A strong existing relationship with local law enforcement allowed CRS to quickly begin work to help keep the community safe during the protests.

"The lack of information and high emotion following a critical incident can be the most significant community threats in situations like police-involved shootings," says CS Lock. "Not being informed about the status of investigations following the

In most police-involved shootings that lead to widespread protests, the first 48 hours are critical to setting the tone for how the city, police department, and community will respond.

ground team consisted of Conciliation Specialist (CS) Justin Lock, CS James Williams, and CS Marquez Equalibria. They were also supported by CS Sarah Majdiak and Western Regional Director Ronald Wakabayashi.

According to CS Lock, in most police-involved shootings that lead to widespread protests, the first 48 hours are critical to setting the tone for how the city, police department, and community will respond. Positive interactions during this time can lead to constructive outcomes, while negative interactions can foster deep mistrust and continued conflict.

During this critical 48-hour period, CRS activated

shooting and not knowing how to find out more details about the inquiry process motivates many protests immediately following an incident."

CRS's existing relationship with local community groups provided a means to keep the community informed as CRS helped to control rumors and answer questions about the investigatory process to prevent protests from escalating into violence.

City Hall Responds to Protestors

Protesters turned their frustration toward City Hall and shut down a public meeting of the City Council. The mayor and other city leaders were at a crossroads where their actions could either help unite a divided city or create further

resentment and mistrust. City leaders asked CRS for assistance.

“CRS walked the council through different scenarios,” says CS Lock, focusing on how similar circumstances transpired elsewhere. “The goal was to get the city to look at the protesters’ anger through a lens different from their own.”

On March 27, 2018, the mayor called to order a special city council meeting following the shooting. Hundreds of protesters surged past security officers and metal detectors to attend. The city had never before seen such crowds at a council meeting, and

with city and community leaders to identify ways to address the city’s problems. Any solution to peacefully engage the community needed to address current protests, rebuild trust between the police and the community, work across all six Sacramento police districts, and identify the challenges facing different parts of the city. This early assessment led to the creation of the Neighborhood Engagement Strategy Talks (NEST) program. The program assembled a diverse group of people from around the city to improve police-community relations neighborhood by neighborhood. An open call for applications to participate in the NEST program drew interest



CRS’s support of officials and community groups in Sacramento is ongoing as the city continues to work to improve police-community partnerships.



the chamber could not accommodate the number of people wishing to enter. Fortunately, CRS had worked with the city on contingency planning ahead of the meeting, and the police department was able to safely manage the situation, including directing people to overflow areas.

Moving from Protests to Dialogue in Sacramento

After averting a potential crisis at the city council meeting, CRS began a multi-factor assessment of Sacramento’s situation and started working

across the city. Hundreds of people applied to be part of the talks, and each applicant answered two central questions: what they thought was going well in the city and what they felt needed improvement.

After the city conducted a careful applicant intake process, CRS worked with the city to form six NEST groups – one for each of the six Sacramento police districts. Throughout June and July 2018, CRS engaged the city’s neighborhoods in NEST dialogues in each police district. Each NEST dialogue involved

faith representatives, business leaders, social service providers, and residents from the police district. The talks also included representatives from city and state government to ensure that residents' feedback went directly to policymakers.

As part of the program, participants expressed their general thoughts and concerns about policing. Across the city, perspectives varied. Economically advantaged neighborhoods tended to focus on reducing local crime, such as vandalism, public drug use, and theft, as well as concerns about the homeless population. Economically disadvantaged neighborhoods were concerned more with racial profiling and excessive use of force. Across all six NEST

In the months following the program, the city and police department made progress toward improved relationships with the community. At the time of Stephon Clark's death, the police department lacked key policies that could have informed officers' handling of the situation. With input from the NEST dialogues, the police adopted two new policies: one on officer body cameras and another on foot pursuits.

Due to the general concern among residents that they lacked knowledge of police protocols and training, Sacramento law enforcement agencies also changed how they communicate with the city's residents.

“As an independent, neutral party, CRS engaged the participants in implementing solutions on which they could all agree.”

—CRS CONCILIATION SPECIALIST JUSTIN LOCK

dialogues, participants wanted to know more about police tactics, training, and policies.

Moving Forward

The NEST program was an early step in helping to heal a fractured city. “As an independent, neutral party, CRS engaged the participants in identifying solutions on which they could all agree,” observed CS Lock. “It is often hard to measure if tensions improve, but there are tangible measures of success in Sacramento. Groups that refused to speak to law enforcement now have open lines of communication.”

CRS's support of officials and community groups in Sacramento is ongoing as the city continues to work to improve police-community partnerships. Sacramento law enforcement is still using the tools and best practices that CRS provided in the aftermath of the Stephon Clark shooting. “Sacramento's new neighborhood engagement strategy does more than provide real-time, city-wide feedback to the police department and city leaders,” said CS Lock. “Neighborhood engagement gives the police and the city leaders a means to actively use the feedback to inform practices and procedures moving forward.”



▲ Mayor Joseph Schember (left) and Community Liaison Michael Outlaw (right) were instrumental in implementing the SPCP program in Erie, PA. (U.S. Department of Justice)

Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships

In FY 2018, CRS launched the pilot program, Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships (SPCP). The program is designed to improve public safety by strengthening trust and developing partnerships between law enforcement professionals and the diverse communities they serve.

The SPCP program engages city officials, local law enforcement, community leaders, and other concerned stakeholders in a day-long dialogue to identify concerns in the community and develop solutions collaboratively. CRS can facilitate the program in response to a critical incident that creates tension in the community, such as a hate crime. The program can also help local

leaders address longstanding distrust and historical barriers that hinder positive police-community relations.

SPCP Program Pilots in Erie, Pennsylvania, and Topeka, Kansas

The first SPCP pilot program took place in Erie, Pennsylvania, in April 2018. CRS Conciliation Specialist Charles Phillips facilitated planning for the event, which included Erie Mayor Joseph Schember, Erie Chief of Police Daniel Spizarny, Erie Deputy Chief of Police Michael Nolan, and a group of local civil rights and community leaders. The City of Erie was experiencing racial tension and a strained relationship between law enforcement and the local African American community following a series of encounters alleged to be racially motivated.

“Every time we’d have a major incident, it seemed like we were talking from one end, and the citizens were talking from another,” said Chief Spizarny. City and law enforcement leaders were committed to taking a new approach to engage with the community and collaboratively address the city’s problems.

In June 2018, the city of Topeka, Kansas, became the second pilot location for the SPCP program. The 2017 shooting death of Dominique White, an African American man, by two Topeka police officers had created racial tensions in the city leading to widespread protests. To address the concerns of the community, the Topeka Chief of Police William Cochran, Topeka City Manager Brent Trout,

and other city officials sought CRS’s help to facilitate a dialogue with community members. CRS Conciliation Specialist Rita Valenciano worked with city and law enforcement officials for several months to develop a program to foster constructive dialogue.

According to Chief Cochran, the Topeka SPCP program was “an opportunity for everyone involved to come to the table on equal footing and to have their voices and perspectives heard.”

The SPCP program engages city officials, local law enforcement, community leaders, and other concerned stakeholders in a day-long dialogue to identify concerns in the community and develop solutions collaboratively.

SPCP Planning and Trust-Building

The SPCP program is customized to meet the unique needs of local communities and requires the commitment and active involvement of city, law enforcement, and community leaders to be successful. Both in Erie and Topeka, CRS helped organize SPCP planning committees comprised of diverse representatives from government, police departments, civil rights organizations, interfaith groups, and other local stakeholders. With CRS’s support, these planning committees spent several months developing the agenda

and format for their SPCP programs, discussing key issues that needed to be addressed, and engaging with the community to ensure the representation of diverse perspectives. This extensive planning helped to build trust and an early positive working relationship between city leaders and the community.

The program is based on the principle that the best approach to solving local problems is for local leaders to play an active role in facilitating discussions with the community and identifying solutions collaboratively. To this end, CRS trained city officials and community leaders in both Erie and Topeka to serve as program facilitators. These volunteers were then able to train others, thus creating local capacity for the city and community to address future problems through dialogue.

The extensive planning for the SPCP program culminated in a one-day convening of stakeholders in both Erie and Topeka to discuss key issues impacting the community and identify possible solutions. The Erie SPCP session took place on April 20, 2018, at Mercyhurst University. The Topeka SPCP session took place on June 8, 2018, at Washburn University. Both programs involved small group discussions where participants shared their thoughts with other community members of both similar and different backgrounds to foster a greater understanding of shared and diverse perspectives.

“You have people that just feel disconnected, and they want to have a voice. What SPCP allows them to do is have a face-to-face conversation with a

police officer in a setting that they never ever would have had otherwise,” said Chief Cochran.

Once these groups identified and prioritized the key issues to address in each city, they proposed solutions to the city’s challenges. For example, in Erie, the group identified increased recruitment of minority police officers as a critical first step in improving the relationship between the police and the community. In Topeka, one of the recommendations from the group was to develop a social media strategy to promote police-sponsored activities, improve community relations, and enhance information sharing.

Reflecting on the spirit of the dialogue and problem-solving during the SPCP gathering, Erie Deputy Chief of Police Michael Nolan said, “There are some things that are easier to work on than others, some we don’t agree on, some we have to have more discussion on. But there’s enough there that we can work on together to come up with solutions to some of these issues.”

The SPCP Council: Continuing the Work

The success of the SPCP program hinges on turning ideas into action. As such, the program is designed to produce an action plan and appoint an SPCP Council responsible for fine-tuning and implementing the plan. The SPCP Councils in both Erie and Topeka consist of diverse representatives from city government, law enforcement, and the community and continue to meet on a regular basis to ensure the action plan is being implemented. These

SPCP Councils add transparency and accountability to the process and demonstrate the continued commitment of all involved stakeholders to improving the relationship between the police and the community.

Marcus Atkinson, Executive Director of ServErie, a community organization in Erie, said, “I’m encouraged by the fact that there isn’t always a neat and tidy answer at the end of every meeting.

relationships. Both cities were experiencing significant tensions, and leaders from the city and law enforcement were committed to addressing these problems directly with open and honest dialogue. While much work still remains, the introduction of the SPCP program in Erie and Topeka was a critical step in repairing damaged relationships between law enforcement and the community through trust and partnership building.

“You have people that just feel disconnected, and they want to have a voice. What SPCP allows them to do is have a face-to-face conversation with a police officer in a setting that they never ever would have had otherwise.”

—TOPEKA CHIEF OF POLICE WILLIAM COCHRAN

▲ Topeka Chief of Police William Cochran addresses an audience of community members as part of the SPCP program. (U.S. Department of Justice)

That makes me know that what’s going on in this room is real and that we aren’t just here placating each other.”

Bringing SPCP to More Communities

The Erie and Topeka SPCP pilots can serve as models for other cities and police departments interested in improving police-community

“Police-community relations are currently trending upward, but we have a long way to go,” said Erie Mayor Joe Sember, reflecting on outcomes from the Erie SPCP program. “Diversity is our greatest strength, and this is a way to really capitalize on that diversity. It’s a major effort on our part. It’s the number one priority of ours, and we continue to work at it.”



▲ U.S. Army soldiers unload food, provided by FEMA, for residents in a neighborhood without grid electricity or running water in San Isidro, Puerto Rico, following Hurricane Maria. (Getty Images/Mario Tama)

Collaborations with Other Department of Justice Components and Federal Agencies

FY 2018 brought opportunities for CRS to collaborate with other Department of Justice (DOJ) components and federal agencies to share best practices and resources, launch joint initiatives, and support common stakeholders in an integrated fashion. Three of these collaborations were particularly significant this fiscal year.

Collaboration on the DOJ Hate Crimes Website

In FY 2018, CRS collaborated with other DOJ components to develop the DOJ hate crimes website, www.justice.gov/hatecrimes, which officially launched on October 29, 2018. The website is a centralized

portal for the Department's hate crime resources for victims, law enforcement, researchers, civil rights groups, media, and other stakeholders.

In addition to CRS, the Civil Rights Division, Executive Office for United States Attorneys, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, and Office of Justice Programs supported the development of the website.

On October 29, 2018, Deputy Attorney General Rod J. Rosenstein announced the launch of the new website at the Department's Law Enforcement Roundtable on Improving the Identification and Reporting of Hate Crimes hosted by the Department's Hate Crimes Enforcement and Prevention Initiative. This collaborative effort reflects the strong working relationships that exist across the DOJ components, as well as the high priority that the Department places on combatting hate crimes.

Hurricane Maria Support in Collaboration with the Federal Emergency Management Agency

To assist with the coordination of a complex disaster recovery operation following one of the most active hurricane seasons in United States history, CRS responded to a request from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for subject matter experts to support outreach and communication efforts.

From November 2017 through early February 2018, CRS Conciliation Specialist (CS) Mildred Duprey de Robles and CS Linda Ortiz deployed on a mission critical assignment reporting to the

Joint Field Office in San Juan, Puerto Rico, quickly responding to the impact and cascading after effects of Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

These catastrophic storms caused widespread damage to critical infrastructure across the Caribbean, including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, devastating local communities. As Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA) Task Force Leads serving the residents of Utuado, Ponce, and San Juan, Puerto Rico, CS Duprey de Robles and CS Ortiz were able to quickly understand and adapt to the sensitivities of the issues impacting the municipalities. They effectively facilitated communications between FEMA and local government officials and staff, which helped build relationships between community groups and FEMA, disseminate accurate information, and deliver essential federal assistance to hurricane survivors.

"Given the logistical complexities of the mission from the extensive and historical damage caused by Hurricanes Irma and Maria to the region, having federal partners such as Mildred and Linda were significant assets to the FEMA mission, and I am thankful for the service they provided to Puerto Rico," said Jose J. Davila, FEMA Intergovernmental Affairs Officer.

Remarking on her experience supporting hurricane victims, CS Duprey de Robles says, "It was an honor to support the FEMA assignment in Puerto Rico and effectively assist disadvantaged communities during the recovery, mitigation, and follow up phases of the natural disaster."

Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention

CRS is a member of Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention, an interagency working group that provides information, resources, and prevention and response methods to address bullying and cyberbullying. The working group disseminates information to the public through the www.StopBullying.gov website.



▲ Melody Caprio (left) and Natalia Casella (right) of CRS stand with Joseph Grunwald, youth activist and anti-bullying advocate, at the Federal Bullying Prevention Summit. (U.S. Department of Justice)

Through its work helping communities prevent and respond to conflicts, bias incidents, and hate crimes in schools and other areas where bullying can occur, CRS is able to provide resources and best practices to students, school officials, faculty, anti-bullying advocates, and victim support groups. In FY 2018, CRS helped plan the biennial

Federal Bullying Prevention Summit, along with senior officials from other Department of Justice components, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The theme for this year's summit, which took place on August 20, 2018, was preventing cyberbullying. The keynote speaker was First Lady Melania Trump, who has prioritized cyberbullying prevention as part of her Be Best public awareness campaign. Joseph Grunwald, an anti-bullying student activist, also spoke.

"CRS is proud to have been a part of the Federal Bullying Prevention Summit. It was a unique opportunity for federal agencies to demonstrate their commitment to combatting the growing problem of cyberbullying. It was truly inspiring listening to the First Lady and other advocates as they shared their personal stories and discussed the importance of bullying prevention in our communities," said Melody Caprio, CRS Program Analyst, who helped plan the summit.

CRS helps schools and communities respond to viral social media messages, perceived to negatively target a particular group, that incite tension, anger, and fear among members of the community. The increased usage of social media and other online tools that can become vehicles for cyberbullying creates new challenges for diverse communities. Through training, facilitated dialogues, consultation, and mediation services, CRS serves as a resource for communities as they respond to these cyberbullying threats.



▲ Participants provide feedback on the updated CRS programs, Engaging and Building Partnerships with Muslim and Sikh Americans, at a stakeholder engagement on March 23, 2018. (U.S. Department of Justice)

Engaging with Stakeholders through Community Outreach

Community outreach is essential to the effectiveness of CRS's work. In FY 2018, CRS conducted over 230 community outreach meetings and events across the country to provide information to stakeholders on CRS services and learn about issues impacting various communities with whom CRS works.

CRS Program Overview and Open House

On March 23, 2018, CRS held a Program Overview and Open House event in Washington, D.C., attended by approximately 50 local stakeholders. CRS provided an overview of and solicited feedback on four recently updated training programs:

- Engaging and Building Partnerships with Muslim Americans
- Engaging and Building Partnership with Sikh Americans
- Reducing Risk During Public Events: Contingency Planning
- Event Marshals: Maintaining Safety During Public Events

The event attracted stakeholders from the Muslim and Sikh communities and other faith-based groups, law enforcement, civil rights organizations, and other Department of Justice and federal colleagues who provided valuable feedback on the programs. CRS staff facilitated an open discussion with participants on topics ranging from addressing cultural stereotypes to best practices for ensuring safety during public marches. CRS captured these

programs and current initiatives and strengthen its network of community contacts.

“This event was an opportunity to directly connect with some of our stakeholders, which happens more in the field than at our headquarters office in Washington, D.C. We need their insights to ensure that our programs are responsive to their needs. In the process, we renewed existing relationships, formed new ones, and obtained vital

“This event was an opportunity to directly connect with some of our stakeholders.... We need their insights to ensure that our programs are responsive to their needs.”

—CRS DEPUTY DIRECTOR, GERRI RATLIFF



valuable insights and incorporated them into its program development.

As part of this event, CRS also hosted an “open house” for stakeholders to interact with CRS staff, peruse new CRS information resources, and review training materials. The open house was an opportunity for guests to gain a deeper understanding of CRS’s services. It also allowed CRS to gain valuable feedback about its

feedback on our materials, website, and trainings that has helped us improve our programs and services to community groups across the U.S.,” said CRS Deputy Director Gerri Ratliff.

Engaging Stakeholders at Community Events

The vast majority of CRS’s stakeholder outreach activities occur at the local level. These activities include participating in community group meetings to introduce CRS to stakeholders who

do not yet have experience with the agency, attending and speaking at stakeholder and professional conferences, and joining other formal and informal gatherings that offer CRS the opportunity to educate communities about the agency. They take place in schools, places of worship, government offices, community centers, outdoor gatherings, and many other venues.

One of CRS's stakeholder engagement activities in FY 2018 was outreach to the interfaith community during the ACT to End Racism rally on April 4, 2018, on the National Mall in Washington

CRS meets stakeholders where they live, work, pray, and congregate to engage with them in their own environment. Often, these outreach activities take place in communities experiencing longstanding conflict and tension or in the aftermath of a critical incident that threatens peace in the community.

For communities that are searching for solutions to address local problems and conflicts, CRS offers programs and services to bring stakeholders together to identify actions to address the concerns of the community.

CRS's outreach activities help make sure that communities are aware of CRS's capabilities to not only support them through dialogue, mediation, consultation, or training, but also to help these communities build the local capacity to independently address their conflicts and tensions in the future.

D.C. CRS provided information on agency services at the event, which was organized by the National Council of Churches (NCC). "The ACT to End Racism rally was the largest public rally in the history of the National Council of Churches. More than 10,000 people joined in a call for ending racism. The NCC is grateful to the Community Relations Service for providing information on its services and programs to attendees who were looking for support in their efforts to reduce race-related conflict in their local areas," said Rev. Jim Winkler, NCC President and General Secretary.

CRS's outreach activities help make sure that communities are aware of CRS's capabilities to not only support them through dialogue, mediation, consultation, or training, but also to help these communities build the local capacity to independently address their conflicts and tensions in the future.

Engaging with CRS in Your Community

Individuals or groups that are interested in learning about how CRS can work with their communities can contact their CRS Regional Office (See page 80).



▲ Regional Director Thomas Battles receives the Roger W. Wilkins Peacemaker Award. From left to right, CRS Deputy Director Gerri Ratliff, CRS Regional Director Thomas Battles, CRS Associate Director Theresa Segovia, and CRS General Counsel Antoinette Barksdale. (U.S. Department of Justice)

Employee Spotlight: Thomas Battles, Recipient of the Roger W. Wilkins Peacemaker Award

In FY 2018, Thomas Battles, CRS Regional Director (RD) for the Southeastern and New England Regions, became the first recipient of the Roger W. Wilkins Peacemaker Award, named after the late civil rights pioneer and former CRS Director. CRS created the award to recognize a CRS employee who has demonstrated a commitment to public service through innovation, vision, resilience, and leadership.

RD Battles joined CRS in 1984 as a conciliator after working with the Florida Commission on Human Relations, doing similar work to address racial conflict in communities. His commitment to bringing people together to address community tensions peacefully began at an early age as a student leader helping to address racial tensions in his junior high school.

In his 34 years with CRS, RD Battles has helped communities avoid violence and civil unrest in the aftermath of some of the most significant conflicts involving race and other issues in this country. His ability to bring together parties on different sides of an issue to talk and solve community problems has been a hallmark of his distinguished career.

Following the high-profile shooting death in February 2012 of Trayvon Martin, an unarmed African American teenager, in Sanford, Florida, RD Battles brought together local faith leaders to discuss their concerns with city officials and work together to de-escalate racial tensions. Following the controversial acquittal of the shooter, a neighborhood watch coordinator, RD Battles facilitated an event at a neighborhood church with city leaders, law enforcement, and community members to peacefully discuss the verdict and local concerns. Despite multiple public demonstrations, no civil unrest ensued and no arrests were made.

During his career, RD Battles has supported numerous diverse communities as they worked



“I understand why people hate. It’s taught.
To address hate that is ingrained in people, we need to first
understand where they are coming from –
why they believe what they believe.”



—CRS REGIONAL DIRECTOR, THOMAS BATTLES

RD Battles attributes much of his effectiveness as a conciliator to simply listening. For RD Battles, resolving conflict is about turning negative situations into positive ones through dialogue. “We need to bring people to the table to have a conversation,” he says, “and I say start by telling your story.”

to prevent and respond to hate crimes, and his approach begins as it does with all of his work – by listening as parties from all sides of a conflict provide their perspectives. “I understand why people hate. It’s taught. To address hate that is ingrained in people, we need to first understand where they are coming from – why they believe what they believe,” he says.

In the mid-1990s, when RD Battles was a Miami-based conciliator, arsonists burned hundreds of predominantly African American churches, mostly in the South. For two years, he says he “saw hate up close” when working with the FBI and other federal agencies on the National Arson Task Force. While the law enforcement agencies investigated potential crimes, he traveled across the country to address rising community concerns about the church burnings. “Churches are the heart and soul of a community,” RD Battles says, “and to destroy a church is to say to the community ‘you don’t matter.’”

career helping communities address conflicts and tensions that largely go unseen. He approaches his work with calmness, modesty, and quiet effectiveness – qualities that have served him well working in environments where tensions are high. Whether he is sitting in the back of a courtroom or moving in a crowd of protesters, he is steadfast in his neutrality, discretion, and commitment to helping people resolve their differences through dialogue and mutual understanding.

Thomas Battles exemplifies the dedication and commitment to service to which every public



“It is a highlight in my career to receive an award named after such a civil rights giant.

It gives me the motivation to keep going in terms of the work.”

—CRS REGIONAL DIRECTOR, THOMAS BATTLES



To help these communities address their fears, RD Battles again started by listening. He listened to the stories of community leaders and ordinary residents, who shared their experiences with race and intolerance. He met with city leaders to hear about their concerns and how they wanted to address their communities’ concerns. He brought people together who did not ordinarily interact to share their stories. In the process, he helped community members build trust and partnership with one another, a crucial first step toward alleviating the fear that the church burnings created.

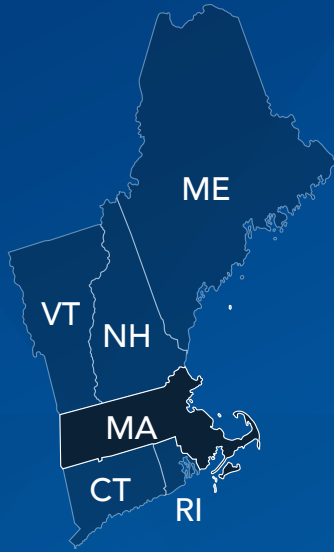
Despite the high-profile nature of some of his cases, RD Battles has spent the majority of his

servant strives, and his contributions to the fields of conflict resolution and civil rights have left a lasting impression in communities across the country. Reflecting on his receipt of the Roger W. Wilkins Peacemaker Award, RD Battles remarked, “It is a highlight in my career to receive an award named after such a civil rights giant. It gives me the motivation to keep going in terms of the work.”

As Thomas Battles continues his tireless work helping communities, the Community Relations Service congratulates him on this well-deserved recognition and extends heartfelt gratitude for his many years of service.

New England Region

Student Walkout over Racial Conflict Easthampton, Massachusetts



Longstanding racial tensions at Easthampton High School erupted in March 2017, when a verbal altercation between white and African American students in the school's parking lot escalated into physical violence after one party allegedly used racial slurs. Less than 24 hours after the fight, more than 400 Easthampton High School students walked out of class to protest what they perceived as evidence of the school's and district leaders' persistent indifference to racism and racially motivated violence on campus.

The unresponsiveness alleged by students and recent violence at the school motivated Easthampton Public School District leaders to take action to address these issues. They requested CRS services to help heal and strengthen the Easthampton community. Throughout the school year and into the summer, CRS worked closely with high school and district leaders to address the community's concerns and build consensus around a plan to move forward. In the fall, the parties agreed to hold CRS's School-SPIRIT program to address the students' issues and develop solutions.

In November 2017, CRS trained Easthampton parents and community members to conduct the program. Then for two days in November, the trained, local volunteers facilitated the program with CRS for approximately 80 student participants. On the program's first day, students met in groups to identify issues facing Easthampton High School. On the second day, students identified solutions and presented them to school district leaders. At the program's conclusion, student participants selected their representatives to serve on a SPIRIT Council with the vice principal and the school resource officer.

Less than 30 days after the School-SPIRIT program, the Easthampton SPIRIT Council met to begin implementing solutions to address issues identified as priorities during the program.

CRS worked closely with high school and district leaders to address the community's concerns and build consensus around a plan to move forward. In the fall, the parties agreed to hold CRS's School-SPIRIT program to address issues and develop solutions.

Consultation for Corrections Center

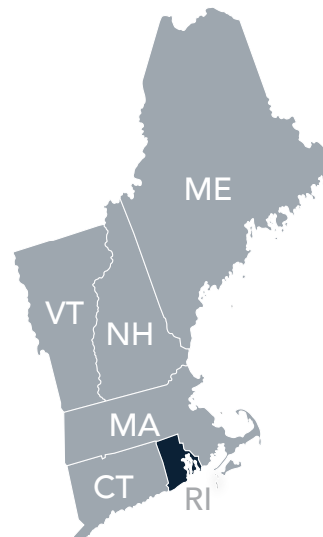
Cranston, Rhode Island

Inmates at a corrections center in Rhode Island perceived the facility staff's treatment of different racial groups as unequal. They alleged staff treated white inmates more favorably than non-white and Muslim inmates. The racial tension escalated from racial slurs to potential violence.

The corrections center contacted CRS for assistance with reducing tensions and helping the center prevent hate incidents in a prison environment. As a first step, CRS spent two months with corrections center staff and state representatives consulting on best practices to address racial and religious tensions. During this time, CRS analyzed inmate demographic reports provided by the corrections center, spoke with subject matter experts, and provided the corrections center with educational materials on working with Arab and Muslim communities.

In March 2018, CRS conducted a Hate Crimes Forum at the corrections center for facility staff. To meet the unique needs of the corrections center, corrections center training staff and state officials developed a program that focused on the culture and religion of Islam and the Rhode Island Hate Crimes Sentencing Act.

This educational forum helped resolve several conflicts at the corrections center and resulted in the formation of a planning group with participants who are equipped to address any future issues and prevent them from escalating into violence.



The corrections center contacted CRS for assistance with reducing tensions and helping the center prevent hate incidents in a prison environment.

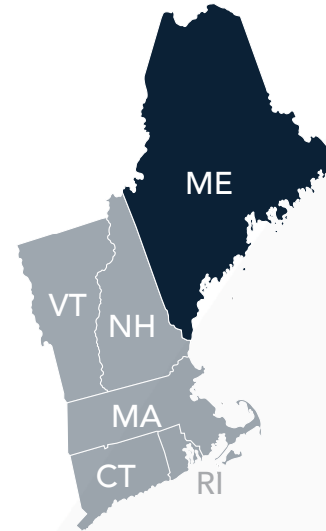
Middle School Racial Incidents

Buxton, Maine

Racial tensions at a middle school in Buxton, Maine, escalated during Black History Month following a series of incidents in February 2018. During that time, a student at the school affixed Confederate flag stickers to a laptop. Another incident involved a teacher drawing parallels between the Black Panther Party and Black Lives Matter during a lesson and asking only African American students which group they would join today. Tensions at the school were already high after an incident earlier in the academic year when a student wore a shirt to school with the Confederate flag, heightening school leaders' concerns for the safety of their students.

Following the Black History Month incidents, school officials contacted CRS about a program to reduce potential violence and prevent hate crimes targeting the district's students. Throughout April 2018, CRS consulted with small groups of school district leaders, who agreed to draft a 24-month plan to develop a commission capable of responding to bias-motivated incidents throughout the district. The group also decided to bring CRS's School-SPIRIT program to the district as a critical measure to prevent racially-motivated violence.

Less than a month later, CRS trained five facilitators to lead the program for a diverse group of student leaders. During the course of the two-day program, students engaged in facilitated dialogues about their personal experiences with race and racially-motivated bias and developed solutions to self-identified issues. The program resulted in an action plan and the formation of a SPIRIT Council to execute the plan with the intent to create a more welcome and safe school environment for all students.



CRS consulted with small groups of school district leaders, who agreed to draft a 24-month plan to develop a commission capable of responding to bias-motivated incidents throughout the district.

Training Law Enforcement Recruits

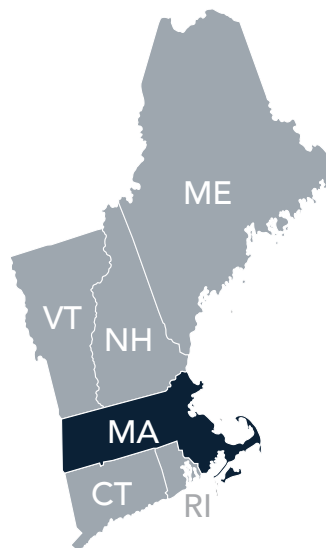
Boston, Massachusetts

Boston, Massachusetts, and the surrounding area faced heightened tensions due to a perceived increase in Islamophobia around the fifth anniversary of the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing terror attack. Boston city officials were concerned about public safety during the April 2018 running of the Boston Marathon and deployed more than 8,000 law enforcement officers from Boston and other jurisdictions to patrol the marathon route.

In response to the threats, a local police academy contacted CRS to train its newest recruits. In light of recent threats, law enforcement leaders sought additional education, protocols, and tools that could be useful for officers serving Arab, Muslim, and Sikh communities.

The day after the 2018 Boston Marathon, CRS brought together 44 academy cadets and provided a customized Arab and Muslim cultural awareness training, designed by CRS and police academy officials to meet the unique needs of Massachusetts law enforcement officers.

Following the training, academy leaders decided to incorporate the training program into the standard curriculum.



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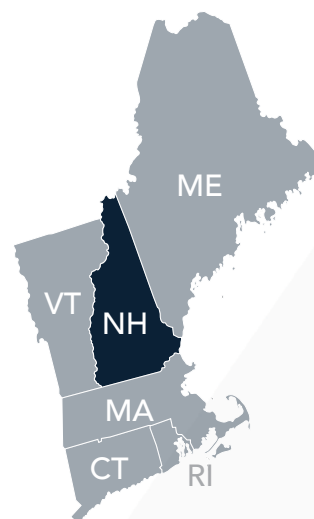
Addressing Hate Crimes on a College Campus

Concord, New Hampshire

In October 2017, the U.S. Attorney for the District of New Hampshire requested CRS's services in light of increasing racial tension on a college campus following reports that white students posted a video of themselves online mimicking an African American musical artist and using racial epithets.

At the U.S. Attorney's request, CRS immediately began facilitating dialogues in New Hampshire with the U.S. Attorney's Office, college officials, and a local civil rights group about addressing racial issues on college campuses. Following the initial meeting in October 2017, the parties agreed to continue meeting as a working group to address ongoing racial bias on campuses.

The working group, with CRS's assistance, conducted a series of forums across New Hampshire for students, educators, and community members to address bias and hate incidents on local college and university campuses.



At the U.S. Attorney's request, CRS immediately began facilitating dialogues in New Hampshire with the U.S. Attorney's Office, college officials, and a local civil rights group about addressing racial issues on college campuses.

Northeastern Region

Bronx Hate Crimes Forum

Bronx, New York

Leaders of the growing West African Muslim community in the Bronx, New York, contacted CRS with concerns about an increasing number of hate crimes being committed in the borough. In November 2017, CRS spoke with the group to identify issues and concerns unique to their community and began developing a tailored Hate Crimes Forum to address those needs.

In April 2018, 50 members of the Bronx's West African community attended the forum, which included presenters from local law enforcement and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York. Participants left the educational session with their questions answered, direct local and federal law enforcement contacts, and steps to best respond to hate crimes.

Presenters provided the community with resources that included information on hate crimes reporting using the city's Hate Crimes Hotline and the status of the development of a local system to track and respond to bias incidents before they escalate. In addition, participants engaged with local law enforcement representatives and had the opportunity to share information about hate crimes and bias incidents in their communities.



In April 2018, 50 members of the Bronx's West African community attended the forum, which included presenters from local law enforcement and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York.

Building a Diverse Community

Staten Island, New York

Racial tension on Staten Island, New York, peaked in 2014 following the death of Eric Garner, an African American man who died in New York Police Department custody. Due to ongoing tensions, the leaders of a Staten Island public school asked CRS to facilitate a series of dialogues with faculty, parents, and community leaders about the neighborhood's changing demographics and heightened racial tensions.

During the last decade, the percentage of white residents decreased on Staten Island, as the African American, Latino, and Asian communities grew, predominantly on the island's North Shore. These demographic changes increased tension between white residents and newer community members, and the tensions permeated into local schools.

Early in the 2017-2018 academic year, a Staten Island public school principal contacted CRS to conduct another series of dialogues on the current racial environment with administrators, teachers, parents, and students and to help improve race relations at the school. CRS facilitated four dialogues with school-related community groups to assess the situation and earn the trust of the different communities. Following the first dialogue in October 2017, school district officials asked CRS to train school leaders as facilitators so they could hold dialogues in the district's 75 schools.



Participants at a March 2018 dialogue that included school leaders and a group of parents and students indicated the need to build relationships between the different racial groups on Staten Island. The group's suggestions included recruiting non-white teachers through job fairs and at historically black colleges and universities, hosting a kick-off event at the beginning of each academic year, conducting implicit bias training, and facilitating team-building activities for the students before the start of the school year.

For continued progress, participants agreed to form a working group led by school district leaders and comprised of students, faculty, staff, and parents. Working group members identified several activities to complete before the end of the academic year, as well as other activities to complete by the end of January 2019. The school district continues working toward the goals agreed upon during the CRS-facilitated sessions.

Addressing Anti-Semitism

Lakewood Township, New Jersey

Lakewood Township in New Jersey is home to the largest yeshiva (traditional Jewish religious school) in the United States, which in recent years has grown to more than 6,500 students. As the area's Hasidic Jewish population increased, many of its members perceived a rise in anti-Semitism and resistance to their growing presence.

At the request of the New Jersey Attorney General's Office (NJAG), CRS facilitated a series of meetings in Ocean County, New Jersey, in February 2018, to address the conflicts in the region. CRS facilitated the first meeting with representatives from the NJAG's office, leaders from the Latino and African American communities, and Hasidic community members from the Jackson, Lakewood, and Tom's River neighborhoods. At the meeting, participants identified key issues facing Lakewood township and the surrounding communities, including references to Hasidic community members as "invaders," township ordinances appearing to adversely impact Hasidic community members, negative press allegedly used to incite anti-Semitism, and social media posts that supported negative stereotypes.

Meeting participants formed a planning group to develop community-driven action steps to address the alleged negative stereotypes and perceived hostile climate facing the Hasidic community. Additionally, the NJAG's office provided information on existing hate crime training and cultural awareness programs for officers and schools.



Throughout the spring of 2018, CRS worked with the NJAG's office, the planning group, and the communities to identify external resources which support community-based processes to create greater unity in diverse communities. CRS also identified goals for community meetings based on conversations with a diverse group of residents.

In April 2018, CRS convened prosecutors from local counties, leaders from the Jewish and Christian communities, and local law enforcement for a facilitated dialogue. In small groups, participants discussed their concerns about religious and race relations and strategies to build more positive relationships in their communities.

As a direct result of CRS's involvement in Lakewood and the surrounding towns, community groups and law enforcement in Ocean County drafted a "Love Your Neighbor" proclamation to be observed May 25-27, 2018, as a public step to show broad support for religious unity. That same weekend, Christian, Muslim, and Jewish congregations heard the same sermon, which local faith leaders had drafted, on their respective days of worship.

Mid-Atlantic Region

Rebuilding a Divided City

Charlottesville, Virginia

After protesters left Charlottesville, Virginia, following the August 11-12, 2017 Unite the Right Rally, tensions in the city remained high. The protest highlighted conflicts in the city around race relations, police-community relations, and distrust between the community and city leaders.

After deploying to Charlottesville to monitor tensions during the rally, CRS remained in the city to address these issues and support city and community leaders in their efforts to reduce racial tensions, repair race relations, and re-establish the city's reputation as a unified and welcoming community.

CRS's initial crisis response and assessment indicated the need to hear from the community to help resolve the city's conflicts. At a public meeting later in August 2017, the first since the rally, more than 400 community members came to speak about their concerns in response to the conflict. CRS helped the city incorporate these concerns into the ongoing recovery strategy.

Based on CRS's recommendations, the city formed the "Community Leadership Council" composed of key city leaders and members of Charlottesville's diverse community. Within days, the planning group met for the first time with representatives from city agencies, the police and fire departments, and community members representing multiple races and religions, as well as the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and



Queer or Questioning (LGBTQ) communities, to strengthen bonds in the city through outreach and collaboration.

From late 2017 to early 2018, CRS continued working in Charlottesville and provided ongoing facilitation for the Community Leadership Council, including helping the group establish decision-making processes and drafting the council's vision and mission statements. Additionally, CRS facilitated the group's regular meetings to ensure that the community remained on a successful re-building path.

The Community Leadership Council remains active in Charlottesville and continues its collaborative work to strengthen the community.

Stun Gun Incident Goes Viral

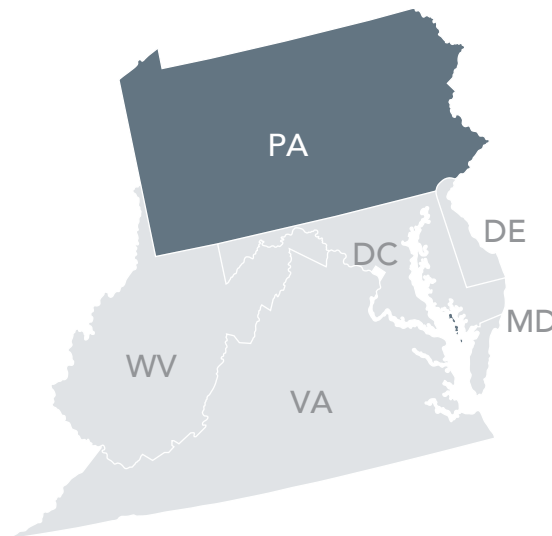
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

In June 2018, an online video showed a Lancaster, Pennsylvania, police officer deploying a stun gun on an unarmed African American man who appeared to be complying with police instructions. The perceived use of excessive force by the police officer elevated racial tensions in the community.

In July 2018, CRS worked with a local civil rights group to convene a meeting with community leaders, civil rights representatives, and faith leaders to provide input to the city on current police-community relations. CRS then facilitated a meeting with city and law enforcement officials and local civil rights leaders to discuss how to address the community's concerns. These meetings prompted city officials and community leaders to form a planning team to address racial tension in the city and work to improve police-community relations.

From July through August 2018, CRS helped facilitate several meetings of the planning team, which led to the creation of a formal action plan. The plan included forming a working group composed of subject matter experts to craft policy regarding use of force by officers. As a step toward improving police-community relations, the planning team committed to holding a community event to solicit public input, facilitated by CRS-trained community members.

Through CRS's efforts, the city of Lancaster established a framework for peacefully addressing racial tensions in the city while empowering community members to take an active role in improving their relationship with local law enforcement.



As a step toward improving police-community relations, the planning team committed to holding a community event to solicit public input, facilitated by CRS-trained community members.

Southeastern Region

Racial Conflict at Summer Event

Tybee Island, Georgia

Tybee Island, Georgia, is a small, beachfront community near Savannah where special events occur every summer, temporarily increasing the island's population from about 3,000 people to more than 20,000. In 2018, local law enforcement requested CRS's services following allegations of racial discrimination during events on the island.

Orange Crush is an unsponsored event that began in the late 1980s as a way for local students from a nearby college to celebrate the end of the school year. Over the following decades, the event has grown, drawing young adults from other historically black colleges and universities. It is the only majority African American event on Tybee Island.

In 2017, the city passed an ordinance to restrict loud music and limit the public consumption of alcohol solely during the weekends that Orange Crush was scheduled to occur. The city reinstated the ban for the 2018 event. Despite assertions from city leaders that the ordinance reflected unique challenges posed by Orange Crush, community groups alleged that the ban was racially motivated and targeted the African American community, as larger events brought more alcohol, noise, and crime to the island than Orange Crush.

With the support of the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia, CRS began working with the Tybee Island community. The day before crowds arrived for Orange Crush, CRS worked

with law enforcement and a local community organization to serve as onsite conciliators between law enforcement, the city, and event participants to help prevent conflict.

CRS monitored the event throughout the weekend. The calm and neutral presence of the conciliators helped successfully diffuse multiple flashpoints and prevent physical violence and arrests.

After monitoring the Orange Crush event in 2018, CRS returned to Tybee Island over the summer and fall to mediate lingering disagreements between the city and the island's residents over whether permits should be required for events like Orange Crush. Through a series of sessions, the parties agreed to a formal regulation process for large events, which was approved by the city.



Black History Month Tensions

Terry, Mississippi

In March 2018, a group of African American students at Terry High School in Mississippi planned a school walkout to protest perceived racial discrimination after the principal canceled the student-planned Black History Month celebration. School leaders dissuaded the students from walking out and facing disciplinary action, but a smaller protest occurred, and racial tensions in the school continued.

To address these tensions, the Superintendent of Hinds County School District contacted CRS to facilitate an educational forum for the students. With the assistance of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Mississippi and the FBI, CRS facilitated the forum for two student assemblies. The forum achieved its multiple purposes. Students voiced their concerns, while school leaders expressed their belief in diversity and support for the students' right to free expression in a manner that would not disrupt regular school activities and instructional time.

At the conclusion of the forum, the Superintendent expressed interest in CRS returning the next academic year to continue to support a dialogue between school leaders, faculty, and students to foster greater inclusion at the school.



With the assistance of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Mississippi and the FBI, CRS facilitated the forum for two student assemblies.

Midwestern Region

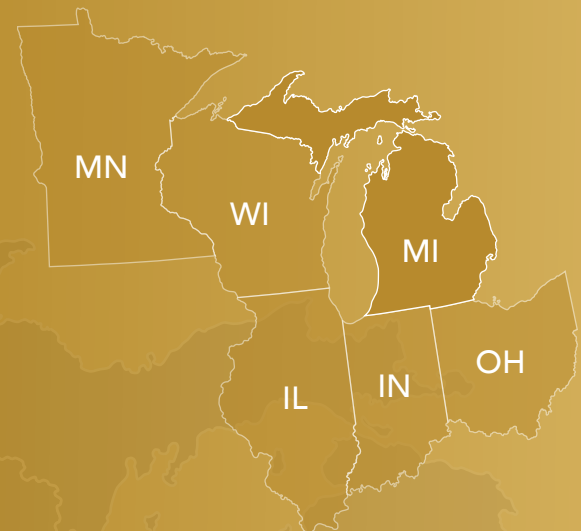
Dialogue on Disability

Macomb County, Michigan

In February 2018, concerned citizens in Macomb County, Michigan, alerted CRS to increased tensions in the community following several incidents of alleged abuse of adults and children on the basis of their disabilities. In one instance, a teacher at a local, special needs school allegedly verbally abused two non-verbal, autistic children. A few weeks later, CRS became aware of allegations that employees at a local grocery store harassed a 23-year old autistic man.

CRS began facilitating dialogues hosted by Macomb Arc, a local disability rights organization, and formed a planning group with other local organizations and city, county, law enforcement, and school district officials. With CRS's assistance, the planning group organized a forum on disabilities for service providers to address the alleged incidents.

In March 2018, Macomb Arc hosted the forum, attended by 30 individuals, which included presentations by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan's Civil Rights Unit and state civil rights officials. Forum participants agreed to continue meeting more frequently and increase communication between their agencies.



With CRS's assistance, the planning group organized a forum on disabilities for service providers to address the recent alleged incidents.

Transgender Dialogues

Detroit, Michigan

Less than a week before Thanksgiving 2017, a 36-year old African American woman was shot and robbed in Detroit, Michigan, reportedly based on her gender identity. The incident increased tension and fear of further attacks in the LGBTQ communities.

Immediately following the attack, CRS convened LGBTQ community leaders and representatives, who agreed to form a planning group comprised of LGBTQ groups, service providers, and civil rights groups to begin planning a community forum to address the LGBTQ communities' concerns.

Through a series of facilitated dialogues with the Wayne and the Oakland County LGBTQ communities, state civil rights officials, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan, and local law enforcement, CRS organized a March 2018 "Talk with the Girls" forum for members of the transgender community in Detroit.

At the forum, transgender women of color discussed their fears and safety concerns in Detroit. Presenters included prosecutors and law enforcement officers whose presence reassured participants that law enforcement agencies were committed to ensuring the safety of the transgender community.



CRS convened LGBTQ community leaders and representatives, who agreed to form a planning group comprised of LGBTQ groups, service providers, and civil rights groups to begin planning a community forum to address the LGBTQ communities' concerns.

Small Community Addresses Hate Crimes**Delano, Minnesota**

An African American family in Delano, Minnesota, was driven out of their home after finding it vandalized, inside and out, with racist graffiti in March 2017.

The incident shook the small community of Delano, which did not have the resources to fully respond to the incident. Following the break-in, Delano residents knew that the small, predominately white community had to come together to stand against hate.

To respond to the incident, CRS worked with city officials to pass an ordinance in October 2017 creating the Spirit of Community Commission to advise the city council on the fair and equal treatment of all persons. The Commission created a long-term action plan to prevent further hate incidents in the city. In January 2018, city and law enforcement officials and business and community leaders in the city signed the action plan.

With CRS's assistance, the Commission proceeded to create the Bias/Hate Crime Response Plan, which the city adopted in June 2018. The plan provides a formal blueprint for the city, law enforcement, and community to respond to hate crimes when they occur.



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Diversity and Inclusion in Schools

Mason, Ohio

Following a series of racially-charged incidents targeting African American students at various schools during the 2017-2018 academic year, school district leaders requested CRS's assistance to address the district's overall diversity, equity, and inclusion issues.

The incidents at the schools occurred inside and outside of academic settings, involved both teachers and students, and included racially-charged social media posts that spread rapidly. At the school district's request, CRS spoke with school officials to get more details on the incidents and how the district currently handles racial conflicts.

CRS's initial assessment determined the need for mediation, beginning with African American parents and school administrators. In April 2018, CRS held the first of two mediation sessions with four school administrators and six African American parents of students in the district. Participants identified specific issues around trust, accountability, transparency, and communication that impact diversity and inclusion in the district. At a second mediation session later that month, participants continued to discuss those issues and strategies to restructure the district's diversity council.

The mediation resulted in a memorandum of understanding that documented the outcomes of the discussions between parents and school district representatives, including next steps. In June 2018, a participating parent carried out one of their first agreements, which was to host a community conversation with the incoming school superintendent to hear the parents' concerns regarding diversity and inclusion.



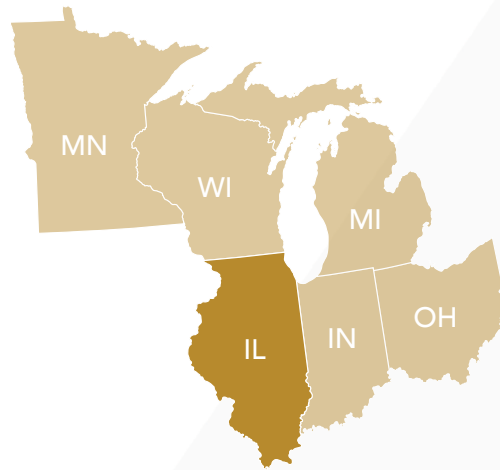
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Places of Worship Threatened**Chicago, Illinois**

In March 2018, representatives from the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago (CIOGC) contacted CRS for assistance following a series of alleged hate incidents directed at the Muslim community.

Due to threats faced by mosques in the area, CIOGC asked CRS to facilitate its Protecting Places of Worship forum for the Chicago Muslim community. In April 2018, CRS worked with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois, the FBI, and local emergency management and law enforcement officials to facilitate the forum and provide active shooter training. The forum included CIOGC leaders and representatives of more than 50 Muslim organizations and schools in the greater Chicago area.

The forum provided faith leaders with information on hate crimes laws and statistics, best practices and resources for securing places of worship, and opportunities to network and share information with local and federal law enforcement representatives.



CRS worked with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois, the FBI, and local emergency management and law enforcement officials to facilitate the forum and provide active shooter training.

Southwestern Region

Heightened Tensions at Rival Schools

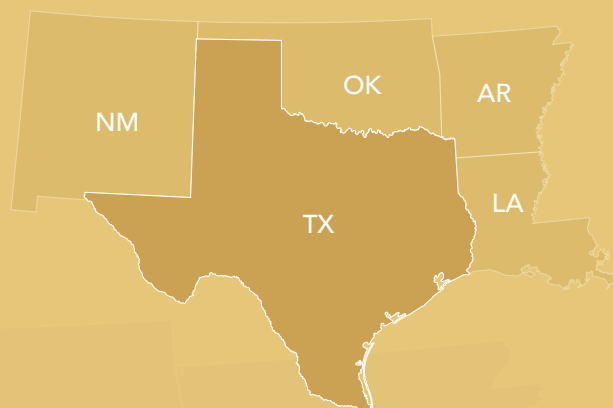
Dallas, Texas

Witnesses at an October 2017 high school football game in Dallas, Texas, alleged that cheerleaders from the rival school exchanged racially insensitive comments, which later appeared on social media. As a result of the incident, racial tension between the two schools became extremely high, and school leaders became concerned about public safety.

Fearing rapid escalation, school district officials placed an urgent call to CRS to help facilitate a dialogue between the two schools. That same day, CRS held an emergency dialogue with the principals, coaches, district personnel, and counselors to discuss the incident and how to address the conflict. The group decided to have CRS facilitate its School-SPIRIT program with the two schools, and CRS immediately began training district staff to serve as program facilitators.

Less than 48 hours after the initial call, CRS assisted district staff in facilitating the School-SPIRIT program. The program allowed students to discuss the racial tension between the schools and empowered them to identify solutions. At the program's conclusion, CRS met with the principals of both schools to discuss the students' recommendations on how to address the inter-school conflicts.

The School-SPIRIT program resulted in a written action plan with concrete steps for both schools to improve relations between the student bodies.



CRS held an emergency dialogue with the principals, coaches, district personnel, and counselors to discuss the incident and how to address the conflict.

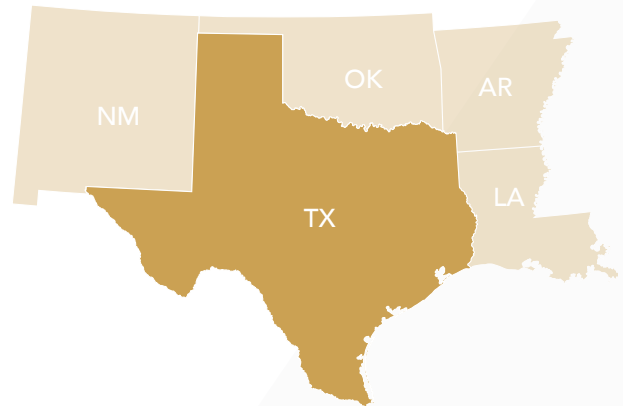
Law Enforcement and Transgender Community Training

Dallas, Texas

In the fall of 2017, CRS began working with local law enforcement after an uptick in alleged hate crimes against transgender individuals that resulted in increased interactions between patrol officers and members of the transgender community. Local law enforcement officials asked CRS to provide best practices to its patrol division for interacting with transgender individuals. In response, CRS offered to facilitate its Law Enforcement and Transgender Community training.

CRS trained members of the patrol division to help facilitate the program along with subject matter experts. The December 2017 training was attended by officers, other law enforcement personnel, business owners, and community leaders, who learned best practices for improving communication, avoiding misunderstandings, and interacting with transgender individuals.

The training helped improve trust between local law enforcement and the transgender community. Following the training, CRS continued to assist local law enforcement by creating strategies for developing partnerships with transgender community leaders.



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Prayer Patrol Partnership

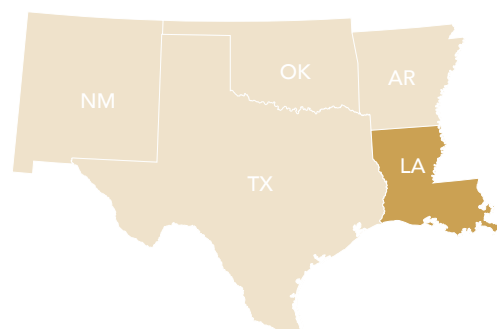
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

In 2018, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was still dealing with racial tensions in the aftermath of the July 2016 police shooting death of Alton Sterling, that had been followed by the shooting of six police officers by a lone gunman, resulting in three deaths.

The racial tensions and strained relationship between Baton Rouge law enforcement and the African American community prompted the new police chief to request CRS assistance to help the city improve police-community relations. In February 2018, CRS facilitated a dialogue with the police chief, his command staff, and the U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana to discuss ways to improve the situation and create greater trust between the police and the community. They decided to form a partnership with faith leaders to help address racial tension in the community.

The initiative became known as the “Prayer Patrol” Partnership, which focused on developing healthy and sustainable relationships between law enforcement and the African American community. From February through July 2018, CRS facilitated a series of dialogues with law enforcement, city officials, and clergy members to develop the mission, vision, and structure of the partnership and train volunteers on how to facilitate meetings. CRS also helped participants create a formal action plan for announcing the partnership and how it would function.

The new Prayer Patrol Partnership provides opportunities for community members, supported by faith leaders, to express their concerns to police and city officials and help identify solutions.



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Detention Center Community Advisory Board

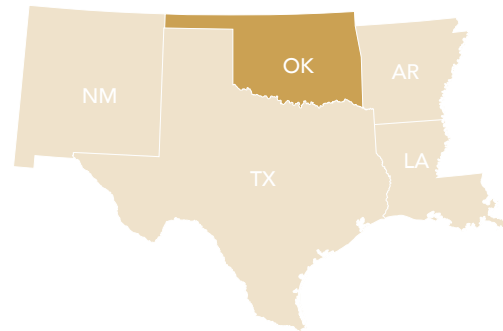
Norman, Oklahoma

The sheriff of Cleveland County, Oklahoma, requested CRS assistance to develop a Community Advisory Board to address the community's concerns about perceived disparate treatment of inmates, based on race, at the Cleveland County Detention Center.

In April 2018, CRS facilitated a dialogue with county officials and the sheriff to outline the mission, goals, application process, and structure of the board. From April to May 2018, the county accepted applications to join the board, and a panel of community leaders reviewed the applications.

In June 2018, CRS and the sheriff's department met with an existing group, the Oklahoma Police and Community Trust, which included community advocates and members of civil rights groups, to discuss implementing the board. At the meeting, discussion topics included violence, mental health, racial bias, and other issues impacting inmates of the detention center. The meeting helped to build trust between the county and the community, create transparency on how the board was established, and provide a voice to the community on how detention center inmates were treated.

The Cleveland County Community Advisory Board held its first meeting in September 2018 and is the only group of its kind in the state. The board's members include representatives from a diverse cross section of communities from Oklahoma City to Lexington, as well as unincorporated areas of the county.



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Central Region

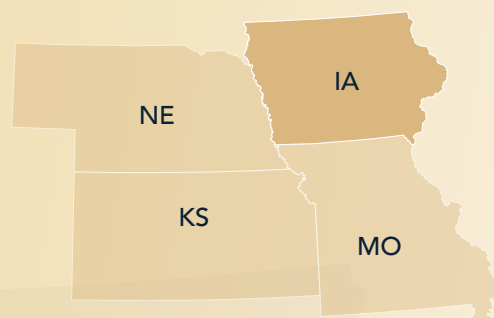
Racial Tension in High School

Creston, Iowa

In September 2017, five football players at a high school posed for a photograph in front of a burning cross with the group wearing white hoods, one student wielding a weapon, and another waving a Confederate flag. The image spread rapidly on social media and was featured in the news. The small rural community, with a changing racial demographic, was challenged to deal with the racial fallout within the high school.

CRS contacted the high school principal and offered services to address the racial tension in the school and in the broader community. CRS offered to facilitate the School-SPIRIT program at the high school to create an open dialogue and empower students to address problems in their school. The School-SPIRIT planning committee reached out to representatives of the city's major employers, local government, school board, faith community, and local college to serve as facilitators for the program.

For two days in April 2018, the School-SPIRIT program engaged high school students from diverse backgrounds and allowed them to discuss their concerns about racial issues in their school and identify solutions. At the program's conclusion, student participants selected representatives among their peers to report the identified concerns to school district leaders. The students' initial report spurred the adults present to quickly address the student population's most pressing



The School-SPIRIT program engaged high school students from diverse backgrounds and allowed them to discuss their concerns about racial issues in their school and identify solutions.

concerns. The program participants also created a SPIRIT Council to help implement the solutions identified during the program.

When CRS returned to the school in September 2018, the principal outlined which issues he was able to address over the summer. The principal relayed to CRS that the School-SPIRIT program had a positive and immediate impact on improving the school's culture. As the school continues to address the student recommendations for improving school culture and security, the principal has asked CRS to return in two years to conduct another School-SPIRIT program.

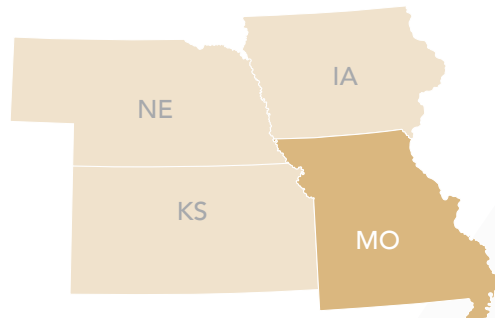
Addressing Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes

Blue Springs, Missouri

In 2017, in Blue Springs, Missouri, racial graffiti was found on the window of an African American-owned barber shop. Within days of that incident, an African American student at a local high school discovered a racial slur written on one of her papers, while other African American students reported that certain students referred to a hallway area where they congregated as “Africa.”

The incidents caused tension in the Blue Springs community, and city officials contacted CRS for assistance. To help the community address the situation, CRS first worked with school administrators, faculty, and students to facilitate three School-SPIRIT programs at Blue Springs high schools from September to October 2017. The programs allowed students to discuss their concerns around issues such as bullying, teacher-student relationships, and mental health, and play an active role in identifying and implementing solutions to the underlying racial problems in their schools.

Based on the success of the School-SPIRIT programs, which received positive feedback from the community, city officials also requested that CRS facilitate a City-SPIRIT program to engage the broader Blue Springs community in dialogue, information sharing, and problem solving to address the city’s racial tension. CRS facilitated the Blue Springs City-SPIRIT program in January 2018 with leaders from



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diverse sectors in the community, including business owners, city officials, residents, public safety officials, student leaders, and school district officials.

The participants discussed concerns and future challenges in addressing the racial problems in the city. Following the discussions, participants agreed to form a SPIRIT Council to implement the recommendations developed during the program and to continue working to create greater unity in the Blue Springs community.

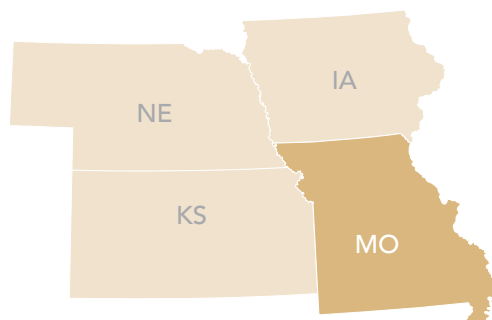
Engaging and Building Partnerships with Muslim and Sikh Americans

Kansas City, Missouri

In February 2017, Adam Purinton shot and killed Srinivas Kuchibhotla, an engineer from India, in an Olathe, Kansas, bar after shouting ethnic slurs at Mr. Kuchibhotla and his friend. Mr. Purinton pled guilty to state first-degree murder charges and later pled guilty to three federal hate crimes charges.

The shooting raised tensions in the greater Kansas City metropolitan area and created safety concerns among many of its members, who feared being targeted on the basis of their race, religion, or national origin. These concerns were particularly felt among Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu community members – a growing population in the area. To proactively address these concerns, a local faith-based organization contacted CRS in March 2018 to help the community discuss ways to prevent and respond to hate crimes and bias incidents.

CRS facilitated a series of dialogues and consultations with law enforcement and the faith community. In April 2018, CRS helped the local faith-based organization work with local law enforcement to provide active shooter training to its members. A month later, CRS facilitated a Protecting Places of Worship forum at a local college. The May 2018 forum brought together leaders from the Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Jewish, and Christian faiths, along with law enforcement and emergency management officials, to discuss how they could work together to protect their religious centers from hate crimes. The participants agreed to form a working group to meet and identify next



steps to connect the communities' places of worship with government resources.

In August 2018, CRS continued its work in Kansas City, facilitating its Engaging and Building Partnerships with Muslim and Sikh Americans programs on both the Kansas and Missouri sides of the Kansas City metro area. Through the programs, led by subject matter experts, CRS trained more than 70 law enforcement and public officials from the local, state, and federal levels of government on the Sikh and Muslim faiths to help them more effectively serve these communities.

CRS services helped law enforcement, faith leaders, and other concerned citizens in the Kansas City metro area build stronger relationships, improve communications and information sharing, and create greater capacity to address the safety concerns of its increasingly diverse community.

Rocky Mountain Region

Building Trust Between Tribes and Law Enforcement

Sheridan, Wyoming

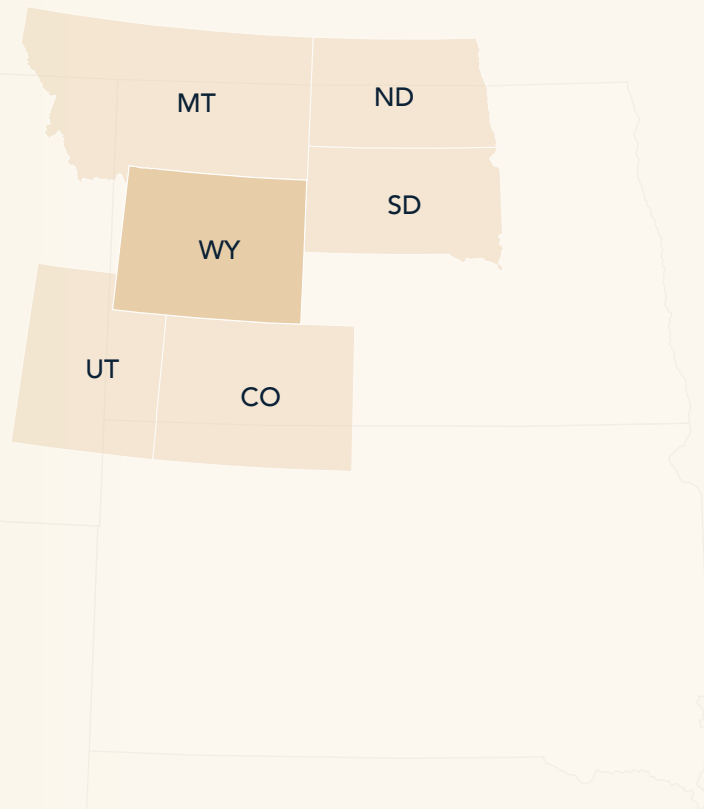
In October 2017, Wyoming state officials notified CRS of three incidents that were increasing tensions among Native American female students at a local college. The first two incidents involved message boards with postings of anti-Native American racial slurs targeting the only two Native American females attending the school at the time. The third incident involved vandalism of a vehicle owned by one of the targeted Native American women. No perpetrator was identified in any of the incidents.

Community tensions increased due to the alleged lack of an investigation or institutional response to the incidents from campus law enforcement. In November 2017, CRS responded to a request from college officials to convene the parties and facilitate dialogue to rebuild trust between law enforcement and the Native American community and diffuse racial tension. CRS led conflict resolution discussions between tribal leaders, alleged victims, law enforcement, and college officials to address the college's response to the alleged hate incidents and tribal community concerns.

CRS worked with tribal leadership to make trauma counseling services available to the affected students and their parents and convened a briefing for the parents on the status of campus law enforcement's response to the incidents. CRS also provided the college administration with hate crimes resources to help guide future responses

by campus law enforcement to address the students' and parents' concerns.

In January 2018, CRS convened community leaders and school officials in a working group to discuss possible response options to the October 2017 alleged hate incidents. In February 2018, CRS facilitated a Hate Crimes Forum at the college with approximately 50 student, faculty, and administration participants. The forum featured representatives from federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies; tribal organizations; and education institutions. CRS also helped local tribal groups and education officials address concerns about educational access opportunities at the college.



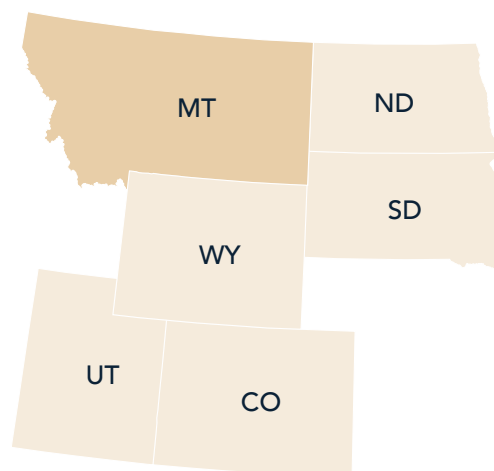
Hate Crimes Response and Prevention

Whitefish, Montana

In 2018, the City of Whitefish, Montana, was experiencing heightened concerns about the possible resurgence of neo-Nazi activity in the community. An onslaught of social media attacks against local Jewish business owners, as well as the presence and perceived anti-Semitic rhetoric of an alt-right leader, who previously resided in Whitefish, created tensions among residents of this small Montana town.

Fearing the potential for escalating anger and conflict among community members, city officials contacted CRS and requested hate crimes training for law enforcement officers. In May 2018, CRS facilitated a training session with the U.S. Attorney's Office for Montana, the FBI, and local clergy on how to prevent and respond to hate crimes. The training included first responder strategies, relevant statutes and legal issues, victim trauma and support resources, and community relations topics. Whitefish police officers and city staff attended the training.

Following the training, federal and local law enforcement continued to monitor the situation in Whitefish, as well as on social media, for potential escalation and violence. No physical violence or altercations ensued.



CRS facilitated a training session with the U.S. Attorney's Office for Montana, the FBI, and local clergy on how to prevent and respond to hate crimes.

Western Region

Addressing Racial Tension in a Latino Community

Los Angeles, California

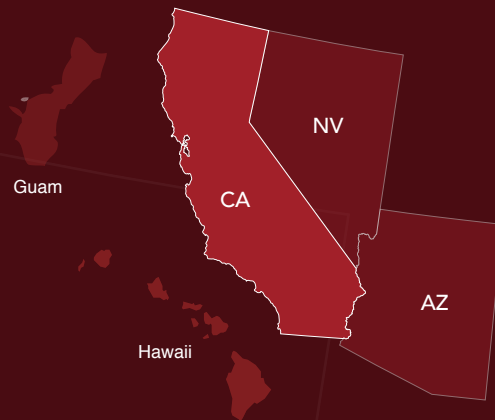
The neighborhood of Boyle Heights in Los Angeles, California, was experiencing heightened tensions due to recent police shootings of Latino community members and allegations from some residents of racial bias and excessive use of force by law enforcement. To help the city address these concerns, CRS facilitated a series of dialogues and provided technical assistance to help improve relations between the police and the community.

In February 2018, CRS facilitated the first in a series of working group meetings with city law enforcement and housing officials and representatives from local community organizations. The meeting focused on building trust and capacity for dialogue between law enforcement and the community in the aftermath of protests and demonstrations regarding local police treatment of Latinos. CRS helped the group identify its mission, audience, partners, facilitators, and next steps.

In May 2018, CRS co-facilitated with city officials a dialogue with a group of young men and women from a public housing complex in Boyle Heights known to experience gang-related activity. Residents raised concerns about alleged routine stops by police due to the residents' proximity to gang members in the same complex. Based on these discussions, CRS helped create a working group with city officials, law enforcement, and

representatives from the public housing complex with the goal of improving police-community relations in the area.

CRS worked with the city to create a model for building trust between the police and the Latino community through engagement and dialogue. The model implemented through the dialogue process continues to address community concerns and prevent future conflicts.



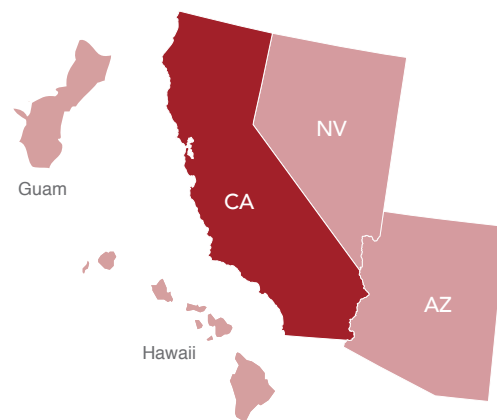
University Accountability Board

Los Angeles, California

A college in Los Angeles, California, has a history of protests from African American students over perceived racial bias from school administrators. In November 2015, a group of students took over the college's administration building with a list of demands to address their concerns. Two years later, tensions continued with students alleging that the college did not properly protect students of color from discrimination on campus.

In the midst of these tensions, a group at the college that was focused on civic engagement contacted CRS for assistance in creating a Race and Human Relations Accountability Board on campus. The vision for the board was to serve as an independent body – composed of students, faculty, staff, and college officials – responsible for identifying and addressing incidents, patterns, and practices impacting race and human relations on campus. Throughout October 2017, CRS provided technical assistance to a group of students, faculty, and staff to develop a practical framework for the board – including a mission, vision, goals, and processes – for multiple stakeholders to collaboratively address race-based conflicts on campus.

In the spring of 2018, the college group presented the model for the board to college officials. CRS continues to monitor the situation and provide further assistance, as needed.



CRS provided technical assistance to a group of students, faculty, and staff to develop a practical framework for the board - including a mission, vision, goals, and processes - for multiple stakeholders to collaboratively address race-based conflicts on campus.

Northwestern Region

School Renaming Controversy

East Portland, Oregon

Three elementary schools in East Portland, Oregon, became a flashpoint in ongoing racial conflicts as the community and the students became increasingly diverse.

In the early 1900s, the Lynch family donated the land on which the three schools still sit. To honor the family's contributions, each of the schools bore the Lynch family name. Despite being named for the family, the word "lynch" in the schools' names concerned African American students and their families.

In 2017, the Centennial School District decided it was in the community's best interests to rename the three schools, and in August of that year, the school board voted to rename the schools immediately. "Lynch View Elementary School" permanently became "Patrick Lynch Elementary School," and the board temporarily changed the names of "Lynch Meadows Elementary School" to "Meadows Elementary School" and "Lynch Wood Elementary School" to "Wood Elementary School" until the community could provide feedback on the schools' new, permanent names.

Many in the East Portland community disagreed with the school board's decision. Disagreements over renaming the schools led to racial conflicts, including threats directed at the African American superintendent and members of the school board.

CRS facilitated a process between school district leaders, parents, faculty, and the community to address ongoing racial tensions in the district that included developing a new procedure for naming the district's buildings and facilities.

To address these tensions, throughout the 2017-2018 school year, CRS facilitated a process between school district leaders, parents, faculty, and the community to address ongoing racial tensions in the district that included developing a new procedure for naming the district's buildings and facilities. In January 2018, CRS trained volunteers from a local university and a civil rights organization to facilitate a series of dialogues between a diverse group of community members who held broad and opposing views on the school renaming initiative. In May 2018, with input from the community dialogues, Meadows and Wood Elementary Schools presented their top three name choices to the Centennial School Board. In June 2018, the board voted to officially keep the name of Meadows Elementary School and change the name of Wood Elementary School to Powell Butte Elementary School.

Through the process, CRS assisted the school district in developing an inclusive school renaming process, and the school district resolved the community's racial tension peacefully. The CRS-trained facilitators remain an active resource in the East Portland community to assist the school district as it continues to make decisions about the future of its schools and students' learning environment.

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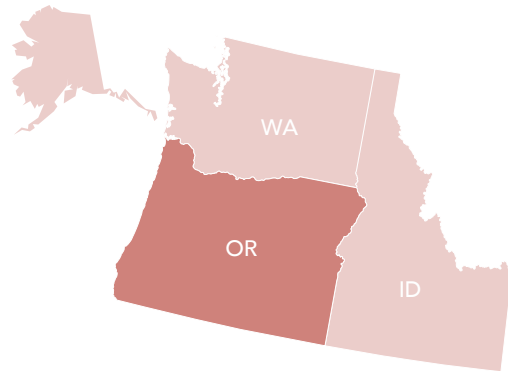
Responding to Rise in Reported Hate Crimes Eugene, Oregon

Community and interfaith leaders in Eugene, Oregon, met with civil rights advocates in July 2017 to discuss the city's recent "Hate and Bias Report" that documented 82 bias-related crimes and non-criminal incidents reported in the city in 2016. The 82 incidents represented a nearly 40 percent increase in bias-based crimes and incidents reported to local law enforcement in a single year.

A city official asked CRS to help address the sharp rise in alleged hate incidents in Eugene, particularly crimes targeting the Muslim, Arab, Sikh, South Asian, and Hindu (MASSAH) communities on the basis of their race, religion, and national origin.

At the request of local city officials, CRS facilitated the MASSAH Hate Crimes Forum in March 2018 at the University of Oregon. The forum included local and federal law enforcement officials, community and interfaith leaders, and panelists from civil rights groups and social service providers, who shared best practices for addressing hate crimes and bias incidents. The public forum drew nearly 300 people from across the community, including middle and high school students concerned about the increased number of reported hate crimes and bias incidents in Eugene.

Many of the forum's attendees represented community organizations that work independently to address hate crimes. At the participants' request, CRS connected these organizations to coordinate future efforts to prevent and respond to hate crimes.



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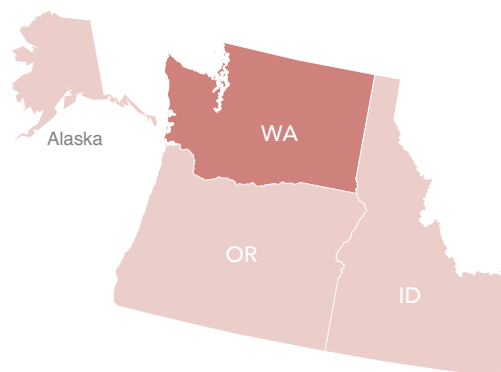
Addressing Hate Crimes Against Asian Americans Seattle, Washington

A local Seattle civil rights organization requested CRS services in December 2017 due to deteriorating relations between law enforcement and the city's Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community.

Beginning in October 2016, Seattle experienced a series of robberies and crimes allegedly targeting Asian seniors, women, and students. In December 2016, the thefts escalated when an unknown assailant robbed and killed My-Linh Nguyen near her Seattle home as she returned from work. Police officers arrested an African American man in connection with the case nearly a year after the killing. However, no charges were filed, and the case remains open.

Trust between law enforcement and the AAPI community had reached a low point, and rebuilding police-community relations had become a priority for law enforcement officials. Initially, CRS worked with the AAPI community and local law enforcement, both separately and together, to assess the tensions and find common ground. A local civil rights organization also requested CRS assistance to educate the AAPI community about the importance of reporting hate crimes to the proper authorities and working with law enforcement to prevent hate crimes from occurring.

Local law enforcement and civil rights leaders worked with CRS to plan an event to address hate crimes and other concerns in the Seattle



CRS worked with the AAPI community and local law enforcement, both separately and together, to assess the tensions and find common ground.

community. CRS trained student leaders from the University of Washington to facilitate the January 2018 event that drew a large audience comprised of parents, high school students, social service providers, teachers, law school and college students, and those interested in the topics due to personal experiences with acts of intolerance and bullying.

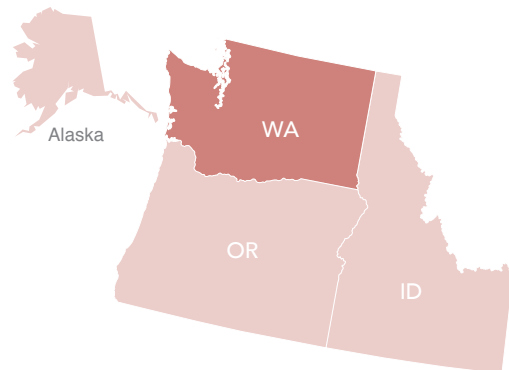
The event provided Seattle residents an opportunity to air their concerns about hate crimes and other issues in the community and connect with local police to improve trust and safety.

Transgender Training for Correctional Institution Everett, Washington

A state correctional institution lacked a formal, written policy for how its administrators and staff should interact with transgender arrestees and inmates. In February 2018, the institution asked CRS to help develop such a policy.

Historically, the transgender community has distrusted law enforcement. To help improve its relations with the community, the correctional institution wanted to develop the new policy in collaboration with leaders from the transgender community. As a first step, the correctional institution asked CRS to train its department staff on best practices for interacting with transgender individuals.

In May 2018, CRS worked with transgender community groups and local law enforcement to deliver the Law Enforcement and the Transgender Community program to approximately 50 corrections staff members. The training led to the creation of a working group to help the correctional institution craft new procedures for working with the transgender community.



CRS worked with transgender community groups and local law enforcement to deliver the Law Enforcement and the Transgender Community program to approximately 50 corrections staff members.

What is the United States Department of Justice Community Relations Services?

The Community Relations Service is an agency within the U.S. Department of Justice that is congressionally mandated to assist communities in resolving conflicts based on race, color, and national origin. Under the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009, CRS also works with communities to prevent and respond to alleged violent hate crimes committed on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and disability. CRS is not an investigatory or prosecutorial agency, and it does not have any law enforcement authority. All CRS services are confidential and provided free of charge to the communities.

What is CRS's jurisdiction?

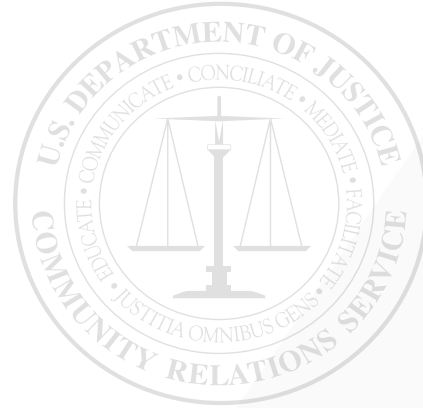
Pursuant to Title X of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, CRS provides its services to local communities where there are community-wide conflicts, tension, or violence stemming from racial or ethnic issues. In 2009, CRS's jurisdiction expanded, with the passage of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, to include providing services to help communities prevent and respond to alleged violent hate crimes committed on the basis of actual or perceived race, color national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability. CRS does not provide services to individuals in non-community conflicts.

Where does CRS work?

CRS works in all 50 states and United States territories. It assists communities large, small, rural, suburban, and urban. Much of CRS's work comes from requests by local law enforcement agencies, community leaders, school administrators, civil rights organizations, government officials, and other local and state authorities.

What kinds of issues does CRS become involved in?

Most of the work CRS performs involves situations where there is racial conflict or violence involving police agencies, schools, or communities struggling to recover in the aftermath of an alleged violent hate crime committed on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, religion, disability, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Often, the most volatile situations CRS responds to are negative reactions to incidents involving police use of force, the staging of major demonstrations and counter events, major school disruptions, and organized hate crime activities.



Who provides CRS services?

CRS services are provided by highly-trained, impartial conflict resolution experts, known as Conciliation Specialists, who are based in ten Regional and four Field Offices across the country. Conciliation Specialists are available on a 24-hour basis, and follow established and standardized procedures in their work. In each incident, CRS first assesses the situation by determining what tensions or issues may be present in a community. This often includes meeting face-to-face with the affected parties. After gaining an in-depth understanding of the situation, and establishing whether the Agency has jurisdiction, CRS works with the parties to determine the actions or services necessary to help resolve the conflict and prevent violence from occurring.

Can a community refuse CRS's services?

Yes. CRS provides its services at the request of local officials or community leaders. Communities may decline CRS services at any time.

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Community Relations Service (CRS)**

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